Sense - Impressions and the Narrator's Consciousness in the Work of Flaubert, James Joyce and Virginia Woolf: A Stylistic Comparison.

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SENSE-IMPRESSIONS

AND THE NARRATOR'S CONSCIOUSNESS

IN THE WORK OF

FLAUBERT, JAMES JOYCE AND VIRGINIA WOOLF:

A STYLISTIC COMPARISON

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SUMMARY

This thesis sets out to make a stylistic comparison of the work of Flaubert, Joyce and Virginia Woolf through a detailed examination of one particular facet - sense-impressions and their relation to the narrator's consciousness. In all three writers I have taken the author and the narrator to be practically interchangeable; my reason for this is explained in the Conclusion.

The texts chosen are the ones I felt illustrated best the writers' receptivity to sense-impressions.

Part I, the study of Flaubert, is concentrated on 'L'Éducation sentimentale and, to a slightly lesser degree, Madame Bovary. A few references have been made to Trois Contes and Salammbô.

Part II, the study of Joyce, deals with Dubliners and A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man and has been carried out in two parts, necessitated by the two different literary forms: the short story and the novel. The analysis has been confined to these two works since his two later works, Ulysses and Finnegans Wake, seem to be concerned more with language than with sense-impressions as such.

Part III, the study of Virginia Woolf, deals chiefly with Jacob's Room, Mrs. Dalloway, To the Lighthouse and The Waves.

The method of analysis has necessarily varied slightly with each writer. References to sense-impressions

have been collected under certain main categories such as: Texture and colour, Light, Movement, Sound and Smell. Where possible, they were again divided into sub-sections, particularly in the case of Flaubert. In the study of Joyce and Virginia Woolf, it was not possible to isolate the individual sense-impressions for they often appear as part of a complex synthesis of different sense-impressions, thoughts and sensations. The main sense-impression in a particular context has therefore been examined in conjunction with the other elements.

KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

To avoid undue repetition of texts quoted frequently in the course of the analysis, the following abbreviations have been used:

Flaubert

Madame Bovary :	MB
Salammbô :	S
L'Éducation sentimentale :	ES
La Tentation de Saint Antoine :	TSA
Trois Contes :	TC

Joyce

Dubliners :	D
A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man :	PAYM
Ulysses :	U

Virginia Woolf

Jacob's Room :	JR
Mrs. Dalloway :	MD
To the Lighthouse :	TL
The Waves :	W
Between the Acts :	BA
A Writer's Diary :	AWD
Collected Essays Vols. I and II :	CE

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Introduction

Alain Robbe-Grillet in Pour un nouveau roman sets out the fundamental changes which took place in the nineteenth century in the development of the novel. The first half of the century had produced works where:

> ... tout visait à imposer l'image d'un univers stable, cohérent, continu, univoque, entièrement déchiffrable. Comme l'intelligibilité du monde n'était même pas mise en question, raconter ne posait pas de problème.

With the publication of Flaubert's novels, there is a breakthrough:

> ... tout commence à vaciller. Cent ans plus tard, le système entier n'est plus qu'un souvenir; et c'est à ce souvenir, à ce système mort, que l'on voudrait à toute force tenir le roman enchaîné. Pourtant, là encore, il suffit de lire les grands romans du début de notre siècle pour constater que, si la désagrégation de l'intrigue n'a fait que se préciser au cours des dernières années, elle avait cessé depuis longtemps de constituer l'armature du récit. Les exigences de l'anecdote sont sans doute moins contraignantes pour Proust que pour Flaubert, pour Faulkner que pour Proust, pour Beckett que pour Faulkner.... il s'agit désormais d'autre chose. Raconter est devenu proprement impossible.[1]

This progression in the world of thought and artistic expression is one which can be traced not only in writers as far removed from each other as Flaubert and

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1. A. Robbe-Grillet, Pour un nouveau roman, Les Éditions de Minuit, 1963, p.31.

Beckett,[1] but equally well in Flaubert, Joyce and Virginia Woolf. Certain views on the artist's role, expressed by Flaubert, seem to foreshadow many ideas which revolutionised the literary and artistic world.

In a letter to Mlle. Leroyer de Chantepie, Flaubert wrote:

> L'artiste doit être dans son oeuvre comme Dieu dans la Création, invisible et tout-puissant, qu'on le sente partout mais qu'on ne le voie pas.
>
> Et puis l'Art doit s'élever au-dessus des affections personnelles et des susceptibilités nerveuses! Il est temps de lui donner, par une méthode impitoyable, la précision des sciences physiques! La difficulté capitale pour moi, n'en reste pas moins le style, la forme, le Beau indéfinissable résultant de la conception même et qui est la splendeur du Vrai,...[2]

Inherent in this extract is a concept of art which was the precursor, not only of the Aesthetic School of the Nineties, as Richard Rumbold states,[3] but to my mind, the whole trend of 'Modern' art in its widest sense.

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1. For an interesting comparison of Flaubert, Joyce and Beckett see: H. Kenner, Flaubert, Joyce and Beckett. The Stoic Comedians, W.H. Allen, 1964.

   > For Beckett is the heir of Joyce as Joyce is the heir of Flaubert, each Irishman having perceived a new beginning in the impasse to which his predecessor seemed to have brought the form of fiction... Beckett.. is the comedian of the impasse, as Joyce of the inventory and Flaubert of the encyclopaedia. (p.70)

2. Correspondance, 18 March, 1857, Quatrième Série, 1854-61, Louis Conard, 1927, p.164-5.

3. Gustave Flaubert, Letters. Selected, with an Introduction by Richard Rumbold, Trans. J.M. Cohen, Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1950, p.7.

A strikingly similar statement about the artist's role appears, nearly 60 years later, in Joyce's A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man. Stephen is having a discussion with a fellow student:

> The artist, like the God of creation, remains within or behind or beyond or above his handwork, invisible, refined out of existence, indifferent, paring his fingernails. (PAYM 219)

The detachment of the artist, the idea that he stands aloof and refrains from commenting on events are salient features of both Flaubert's and Joyce's work. Flaubert occasionally inserts a comment but only rarely. It is through the characters themselves in their environment that whole scenes come to life and an attitude is suggested rather than stated.

Leon Edel has made a fascinating study of what he terms the 'psychological novel' and investigates the degree to which the artist can, in fact, be detached from his creation. He quotes Stephen's opinion about the artist's role which, he says:

> ...raises the further question... whether an artist drawing upon the contents of his own mind (which is the only mind he can use in his creation) is really able to detach himself from his characters: that is whether their subjectivity is not, in reality, his subjectivity.[1]

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1. L. Edel, The Psychological Novel 1900-1950, Rupert Hart-Davis, 1955, p.24.

This point is a complex and interesting one about which I shall make further comment at the end of the thesis. In the course of the analysis of Flaubert's, Joyce's and Virginia Woolf's work, with particular reference to their sense-impressions, certain conclusions can be drawn which help to clarify this subject. Virginia Woolf also detaches herself to a certain extent, her aim being to immerse herself in life as it makes its impact on her and, in so doing, to convey the very essence of reality. To what extent her literary ideas have been influenced by her predecessors, is something I shall return to later.

Let us look again for a moment at Flaubert's letter to Mlle. Leroyer de Chantepie and consider some of its implications. The artist is the creator but remains aloof; his work is not a projection of himself but an attempt to penetrate the essence of life in its various manifestations - physical, intellectual and spiritual. Hence we have scenes presented to us through the eyes of the characters he has created, rather than through the eyes of the novelist himself. This does not mean that he did not project anything of himself into his characters, or that he did not feel for them - quite the contrary, but it does mean that having created them, he stands aside, allowing them to make their impact on the reader. Flaubert, in fact, identified himself so completely with his creations and entered into their life with such

intensity, that he experienced their joys and sorrows as if they were his own. In the course of writing Madame Bovary, he told Louise Colet that:

> Aujourd'hui, par exemple, homme et femme tout ensemble, amant et maîtresse à la fois, je me suis promené à cheval dans une forêt, par un après-midi d'automne, sous des feuilles jaunes et j'étais les chevaux, les feuilles, le vent, les paroles qu'ils disaient et le soleil rouge qui faisait s'entre-fermer leurs paupières noyées d'amour.[1]

A letter to H. Taine describes how he became physically sick when writing Emma's death-scene:

> ...j'avais si bien le goût d'arsenic dans la bouche, j'étais si bien empoisonné moi-même que je me suis donné deux indigestions coup sur coup, deux indigestions très réelles, car, j'ai vomi tout mon dîner.[2]

To move on to Flaubert's next comment on the function of art:

> ...L'art doit s'élever au-dessus des affections personnelles...Il est temps de lui donner... la précision des sciences physiques.

Art is not a mere projection of the artist's own view of life but an attempt to portray life by means of vigorous analysis and studied detail. Hence his correspondence with authorities in many fields, as Balzac had also done, asking for information and verifying his facts on historical, legal, medical or even theological subjects.

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1. Correspondance, December 23, 1853, ~~Deuxi~~Trois ème série, Conard, p.405.
2. Ibid., January 1868, ~~Trois~~Cinqu ième série, ~~Bibliothèque Charpentier~~, p.350.

Due to the authenticity of these details, scenes and events are more immediate. However, unlike Balzac, he is selective in his use of detail and in this way portrays not only a scene or a person, but also the pervading atmosphere.[1]

This question of selection and of how the writer achieves his effects, brings us to the subject of style. In all works of art, style and subject-matter are interdependent, but the more we move away from representational art, the greater the role that style plays. A comment Flaubert made at the time of writing Madame Bovary throws interesting light on his views on the relation of style to content. In a letter written to Louise Colet, 16 January, 1852, he tells us:

> Ce qui me semble beau, ce que je voudrais faire, c'est un livre sur rien, un livre sans attache extérieure, qui se tiendrait de lui-même par la force interne de son style... un livre.....où le sujet serait presque invisible, si cela se peut.[2]

This strikes one as being in keeping with much that we understand by style at the present day. Have we not reached the point in the 20th century where style almost constitutes the work itself, irrespective of content?

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1. For fuller discussion of Balzac's and Flaubert's methods, see infra pp. 67-72.

2. Quoted by V. Brombert, Flaubert par lui-même, 'Écrivains de Toujours' aux Editions du Seuil, 1971, p.63.

The massive stone figures of Henry Moore depict family groups, for example, where the size and curved, smooth quality of the stone are as evocative of harmony and security as is the subject itself. Or the work of the artist Serge Poliakoff whose brilliant, thick colours on enormous canvasses need no title - merely 'Composition'. In the world of literature, language comes to be used as a means of suggesting moods, atmosphere and even states of mind - not merely for describing characters or events. Virginia Woolf's portrayal of the rich abundance of a summer garden is conveyed through a synthesis of colour and light:

> The birds sang... Gilt and purpled they perched in the garden, where cones of laburnum and purple shook down gold and lilac, for now at midday the garden was all blossom and profusion and even the tunnels under the plants were green and purple and tawny as the sun beat through the red petal, or the broad yellow petal,..
> (W 127-8)

It can be seen from the random examples from the visual arts and literature that the language and artistic materials used are fully expressive in themselves.

The fact that Flaubert marked a transition in the history of the novel is widely accepted. Harry Levin in his critical work on James Joyce has commented on this in alluding to Flaubert as the 'patriarch of modern fiction'.[1] R.K. Cross in his comparative study

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1. H. Levin, James Joyce: A Critical Introduction, Faber & Faber, 1947, p.12.

of Flaubert and Joyce has traced a great number of parallels in subject-matter[1] and Margaret Mein in a very interesting article[2] has shown how Flaubert in his concept of time foreshadowed many of the theories of Proust and Bergson who in turn have influenced fundamentally such writers as Joyce, Virginia Woolf and William Faulkner, to name only a few. Albert Thibaudet also noted how Flaubert, in certain aspects, tackles the psychological aspect of time in much the same way as Proust was to do. He quotes particularly a passage from Madame Bovary where Emma at the 'Comices Agricoles', intoxicated by the scent of Rodolphe's hair, moves between past and present to experience a whole range of emotions.[3]

Margaret Mein's article raises some important points. She shows how Flaubert's treatment of time and the role that memory plays bear striking similarities with Proust's theories. In his Correspondance he demonstrates 'unity and disintegration within time':

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1. R.K. Cross, Flaubert and Joyce. The Rite of Fiction, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1971.

2. M. Mein, 'Flaubert, a precursor of Proust', French Studies, 1963, pp. 218-237.

3. 'Lisez cette page de Madame Bovary, et voyez à quel point elle contient (avec son style tout opposé) les tours, détours et retours du temps perdu à la manière de Marcel Proust.'

   A. Thibaudet, Gustave Flaubert, Gallimard, 1922, p.274.

> On se dit: "Il y a dix ans que j'étais là", et on est là et on pense les mêmes choses et tout l'intervalle est oublié. Puis il vous apparaît, cet intervalle, comme un immense précipice où le néant tournoie.[1]

Time as it is experienced by the individual and clock-time are two distinct concepts; the distinctions or divisions are made in one's own mind. As Proust wrote:

> ...Mes rêves de voyage et d'amour n'étaient que des moments - que je sépare artificiellement aujourd'hui, comme si je pratiquais des sections à des hauteurs différentes d'un jet d'eau irisé et en apparence immobile - dans un même et infléchissable jaillissement de toutes les forces de ma vie.[2]

A parallel can be seen in Flaubert's original version of Madame Bovary where Charles is caught between these two types of consciousness:

> Un instant interrompue par cet intervalle oublié, sa sensation lointaine continuait, le passé se trouvant être maintenant le présent et son souvenir une émotion renouvelée.[3]

When Emma in Rouen hears the convent bell ringing, the relativity of time is brought powerfully to her mind:

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1. G. Flaubert, Correspondance, Conard, 3me série, p.331.

2. M. Proust, Du Côté de chez Swann I, Gallimard, p.122.

3. G. Flaubert, Madame Bovary (Original draft, reconstructed by Jean Pommier and Gabrielle Leleu), J. Corti, 1949, p.163.

> Quatre heures! seulement, et il lui semblait qu'elle était là depuis l'éternité, car elle venait, en effet, d'y revivre tous ses jours; un infini de passions peut être condensé dans une minute, comme une multitude dans un petit lieu.[1]

Contained in this passage are concepts which foreshadow not only Proust but also far more recent writers who are concerned with the relative nature of time, the role of memory and the flux of life in general. We see in Emma's comment above, the consciousness of clock-time, the awakening of associated memories, and the individual's experience of time relative to the emotion of the moment. For both Flaubert and Proust, time remembered involuntarily is of no particular epoch as it represents time within the soul; it is 'le temps souverain'.

Joyce in his experience of 'epiphanies' crystallises, not so much a moment in past time which is relived in the present through memory, but a moment in the present, fixed indelibly in the individual's consciousness as an experience of reality or a moment of truth.[2] The relativity of time is still a concept of which he was acutely aware - as we may see not only from his 'epiphanies' but also in the form of Ulysses which in its entirety covers only a single day, as does Virginia Woolf's Mrs. Dalloway. This novel of hers is perhaps an

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1. Ibid., p.559. See also infra p. 187 for discussion on Flaubert's final version of the passage.

2. See L. Edel, The Psychological Novel 1900-1950, p.13.

even better example of the treatment of time, clock-time being exemplified in the regular sounding of Big Ben, while the novel itself is composed of a continual flux between past, present and future in the form of memories, present events and the sense of approaching age and death. Moments of understanding are experienced in much the same way as the taste of the 'madeleine' in Proust, which brings back the past. As Peter Walsh tries to analyse his relationship with Clarissa:

> There was a mystery about it. You were given a sharp, acute, uncomfortable grain - the actual meeting; horribly painful as often as not; yet in absence, in the most unlikely places, it would flower out, open, shed its scent, let you touch, taste, look about you, get the whole feel of it and understanding, after years of lying lost. (MD 136)

In Virginia Woolf's novels, time,apart from being flexible, comes to have an almost symbolic quality, creating a framework within which the characters move. The introductory passages to the different sections of <u>The Waves</u> are set at different times throughout the day - from sunrise to sunset, representing the stages in the lives of the group of friends as they progress through childhood to adulthood and finally old age.

Similarities can be observed in Virginia Woolf's consciousness of time and experience, Proust's theories and Henri Bergson's concept of 'la durée' which was very basic to what is known as the 'stream of

consciousness' novel.[1] The flux of life is represented as it makes its impact on the individual. It is no longer possible to think in terms of fixed identity and a common reality. As Virginia Woolf herself tells us in a celebrated statement:

> Life is not a series of gig-lamps symmetrically arranged; life is a luminous halo, a semi-transparent envelope surrounding us from the beginning of consciousness to the end. Is it not the task of the novelist to convey this varying, this unknown and uncircumscribed spirit.....[2]

In examining the three writers, Flaubert, Joyce and Virginia Woolf, it is necessary to look for evidence of any familiarity they may have had with one another's work. That Joyce was acquainted with Flaubert's writing is a well-established fact. Frank Budgen who was Joyce's great friend and confidant during the war years spent together in Zurich recounts how "of all the great nineteenth century masters of fiction, Joyce held Flaubert in highest esteem."[3] He had read all his works and even

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1. Shiv Kumar believes that Virginia Woolf became acquainted with Bergson's philosophy indirectly through her reading of Proust, and he draws some interesting parallels between Bergson's theories and her perceptions:

   > Our moods and sensations are queer blendings of such elements as memories impinging upon and conditioning our present sensory impressions of confused sounds, smells and sights, all forming themselves into highly fluid states of consciousness ever merging into one another.

   S. Kumar, Bergson and the Stream of Consciousness Novel, Blackie 1962, p.22.

2. V. Woolf, 'Modern Fiction', Collected Essays II, ed. Leonard Woolf, Chatto & Windus, 1966, p.106.

3. Quoted in R.K. Cross, Flaubert and Joyce. The Rite Fiction. Preface p.v.

memorised whole pages. How much of Flaubert Virginia Woolf had read, we are not told, but presumably she had studied his major works for she was a widely-read and cultivated person. We do know from her diary that she had read his letters and felt a close affinity with him as far as the arduousness of a writer's task was concerned:

> I am learning my craft in the most fierce conditions. Really reading Flaubert's letters I hear my own voice cry out Oh art! Patience: find him consoling, admonishing...[1]

and two days later:

> A good day - a bad day - so it goes on. Few people can be so tortured by writing as I am. Only Flaubert I think.[2]

That she was familiar with Joyce's work is evident from the criticism of him in her diary. She fluctuated between admiring his technique and being totally disgusted by what he wrote. She tells us in 1920 that she had come to a stop in her writing of Jacob's Room and feels that:

> ...what I'm doing is probably being better done by Mr. Joyce.[3]

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1. V. Woolf, A Writer's Diary, Ed. Leonard Woolf, Hogarth Press, 1953, p.269,(June 21, 1936).

2. Ibid., p.270,(June 23, 1936).

3. Ibid., p.28,(Sept. 26, 1920).

Two years later she is in the midst of reading Ulysses:

> I should be reading Ulysses, and fabricating my case for and against. I have read 200 pages so far, not a third; and have been amused, stimulated, charmed, interested, by the first 2 or 3 chapters - to the end of the cemetery scene; and then puzzled, bored, irritated and disillusioned by a queasy undergraduate scratching his pimples... An illiterate, underbred book it seems to me; the book of a self-taught working man, and we all know how distressing they are, how egotistic, insistent, raw, striking and ultimately nauseating.[1]

What could be more damning but at the same time so revealing of her own social and intellectual snobbery? Nigel Nicolson maintains that she was an 'élitist' rather than a social snob:

> ... She was class-conscious - like everyone of her class and generation, she regarded herself as different in kind and degree from the poor: she thought they had ugly voices, bad teeth and uninteresting minds. And the most serious charge is that she was an intellectual snob, and that I think is partly true.[2]

Her final verdict on Ulysses was:

> .....I...think it is a mis-fire. Genius it has, I think; but of the inferior water. The book is diffuse. It is brackish. It is pretentious. It is underbred, not only in the obvious sense, but in the literary sense.[3]

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1. Ibid., p.47,(Aug. 16, 1922).

2. Quoted by Janet Watts in a review of V. Woolf, The Flight of the Mind, ed. N. Nicolson, Hogarth Press, 1975, in the 'Arts Guardian', 16.9.75.

3. AWD, p.49,(Sept. 6, 1922).

So much for these three writers' views of one another. Let us consider now some works of criticism in which comparisons have been drawn and where the influence of the one on the other has been assessed. Richard Cross has made a detailed study of theme and technique in Flaubert and Joyce, taking certain aspects of the work of both and making a close comparison. He has taken, among others, such subjects as the artist's 'priestly vocation', 'epiphanies' in Trois Contes and Dubliners, parallels in a young man's development in L'Éducation sentimentale and in A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, and the rendering of inner experience in Madame Bovary and in 'Proteus' in Ulysses. This study is devoted almost exclusively to subject matter, not to points of style. The sense-impressions which to me seem such a vital part of the physical world that is presented and the characters' particular kind of awareness are not examined in any detail.

A considerable amount of comparative criticism has been written on Joyce and Virginia Woolf, both being exponents of the 'stream of consciousness' technique. Leon Edel in his book on the psychological novel maintains that:

> The influence of James Joyce upon her is much more profound than is generally believed. Indeed, she herself was prompt to seize upon Ulysses as a transcendent work long before it was published and only a few chapters had been serialised.[1]

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1. L. Edel, The Psychological Novel, p.127.

He goes on to quote her own views:

> Anyone who had read the Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, or, what promises to be a far more interesting work, Ulysses,.... will have hazarded some theory... as to Mr. Joyce's intention.....there can be no question but that it is of the utmost sincerity and that the result, difficult or unpleasant as we may judge it, is undeniably important...Mr. Joyce... is concerned at all costs to reveal the flickerings of that innermost flame which flashes its messages through the brain, and in order to preserve it he disregards with complete courage whatever seems to him adventitious, whether it be probability, or coherence, or any other of those signposts which for generations have served to support the imagination of a reader when called upon to imagine what he can neither touch nor see... If we want life itself, here surely we have it.[1]

Edel then draws various parallels between Joyce and Virginia Woolf, particularly in his chapter, 'The Novel as a Poem'. He claims that:

> From James Joyce, Virginia Woolf seems to have obtained a certain oneness and the isolation that resides within it; from him she learned how to give meaning to the simultaneity of experience.[2]

Another critic, Hermione Lee, holds the view that:

> A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man (1917) and the early chapters of Ulysses had a very powerful influence on Virginia Woolf, and their appearance coincided with the major change in her style between 1919 and 1922.[3]

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1. 'Modern Fiction', CE II, p.107.

2. L. Edel, The Psychological Novel, p.130.

3. Hermione Lee, The Novels of Virginia Woolf, Methuen, 1977, p.22.

Avrom Fleishman in a detailed study of her novels has found certain parallels in technique in Joyce's Ulysses and Virginia Woolf's works: he quotes particularly Jacob's Room, Mrs. Dalloway and The Years. In general he shares the point of view of Leon Edel:

> There are also efforts to keep up with Joyce's experiments in conveying the simultaneity of experience by an easy transition from one consciousness to another,[1]

He does, however, examine another aspect of Virginia Woolf's work - the patterning of motifs and use of repetition which he feels to be an integral part of her consciousness. He sees a definite parallel in this aspect in Joyce's Finnegans Wake:

> It is my present object to isolate this unit, the Woolfian motif, and to describe the principle of repetition by which the motif operates in her work. And it is appropriate that this account proceed, initially at least, with reference to Finnegans Wake, the work of art in which repetition-with-variation has been raised to a chief principle of composition...[2]

Considering these critical works as a whole, it may be observed that a good deal of comparative study has been done on Flaubert and Joyce and also on Joyce and Virginia Woolf. It would appear, however, that no direct comparison has been made between Flaubert and Virginia Woolf, despite the fact that a line of development

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1. A. Fleishman, Virginia Woolf: a critical reading, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1975, p.63.

2. Ibid., pp.220-1.

in thought can be traced from Flaubert through Joyce and on to Virginia Woolf. It also becomes clear that these studies deal with theme and treatment rather than style as such. My thesis is therefore an attempt to examine their style and particularly, one facet of their style - their awareness of sense-impressions and the role this plays in the works as a whole.

It seems to me that it is in these writers' use of sense-impressions that we find the characteristic force, beauty and individuality in their respective works. Flaubert's search for 'la splendeur du Vrai' and his belief that 'l'Idée n'existe qu'en vertu de sa forme... le Beau avant tout', Joyce's melodious and poetic prose and Virginia Woolf's fluid style and extraordinary perceptiveness find true expression, to a high degree, in their response to sense-impressions. Examining their work from this point of view, one can certainly find parallels not only between Flaubert and Joyce and Joyce and Virginia Woolf, but also between Virginia Woolf and Flaubert.

Another aspect of their writing is also being examined here: the relationship between sense-impressions and the narrator's consciousness. The impact that the sensory world makes on an author, and through him, on the characters that he creates, the physical beauty of nature, the infinite variations of light, colour, texture, sound and movement which go to build up the wealth of

sensory experience in any individual's life - all these constitute an aspect of these novelists' art which I believe has not been examined in any great depth till now.

In an analysis of this kind, there always arises the question of method-in what way can a stylistic study of three writers be carried out so that it may be equally suitable for all of them? The French philosopher, Gaston Bachelard, has formulated a method for the analysis of style which is most fascinating but is mainly applicable where imagery plays a major role. He developed a system by which imagery is divided into the categories of the four elements: earth, fire, air and water, thus throwing light on some fundamental characteristics in the author's or his character's psychological make-up.

The relationship between a person's physical disposition and his type of imagination can already be seen in works dating as far back, according to Bachelard, as Lessius's L'Art de vivre longtemps:

> Les songes des bilieux sont de feux, d'incendies, de guerres, de meurtres; ceux des mélancoliques, d'enterrements, de sépulcres, de spectres, de fuites, de fosses, de toutes choses tristes; ceux des pituiteux, de lacs, de fleuves, d'inondations, de naufrages; ceux des sanguins, de vols d'oiseaux, de courses, de festins, de concerts, de choses même que l'on n'ose nommer.[1]

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1. G. Bachelard, L'Eau et les Rêves, Corti, 1963, (first published 1942), pp.5-6.

If imagery played an equally important part in the writing of these three novelists, this method of analysis would certainly be worth applying. While Joyce's and Virginia Woolf's style depend to a large extent on imagery, Flaubert's use of imagery is of secondary importance in relation to his style as a whole and the sense-impressions in particular. It appears, therefore, that a different method must be tried. I found that it was possible to examine the subject by collecting the most characteristic references to the various sense-impressions as they occur in a representative selection of these writers' works. The main categories appeared to be: texture and colour, light, sound, movement, smell and heat and cold. In some cases it was possible to impose further divisions by making sub-sections within the main category. For Flaubert's references to texture, for example - a sense-impression to which he seems to have been particularly sensitive - the following sub-sections were made: texture and movement, texture and light, texture and smell.

The same method has been used for all three writers, with modifications, for with Joyce and Virginia Woolf, it became progressively more difficult to isolate single sense-impressions. They often appear in the text as part of a synthesis of sense-impressions closely allied to thoughts and sensations which, as a totality, express a moment of experience. The impossibility of making divisions itself raises a most important point. It tells

us something very fundamental and perhaps unexpected about these writers' apprehension of reality through their artistic consciousness. Without considering subjects such as theme and literary aims, the analysis of the role of the sense-impressions alone reveals a progression from Flaubert's scenes, built up simply through a series of these impressions, to the complex syntheses of sense-impressions of Joyce and Virginia Woolf which convey the many-sidedness of a world where there is nothing clear-cut or fixed. A comparable development can also be traced in the works themselves of Joyce and Virginia Woolf - from the comparative simplicity of Dubliners and Jacob's Room to the extreme complexity of Ulysses and The Waves.

So much for the method. Let us now look at some salient points about the relation between consciousness and awareness of sense-impressions in the three writers. Relatively little has been written on this subject in connection with Flaubert, though Alison Fairlie in a fascinating study of Madame Bovary, just touches on it. Flaubert's preoccupation with the search for the 'mot juste', the belief that sound, rhythm and even syntax were as important as the words themselves in expressing nuances of meaning and his aim to produce works with an inner beauty and harmony - all these facets of his writing are inextricably connected with his awareness of sense-impressions. As Alison Fairlie says in her analysis:

> Precise and subtle sense-impressions are used to evoke widely varied atmospheres and events: the stiff and bristling awkwardness of the guests at the village wedding; the soft and cloying scents and the hesitant or muffled sounds of a late summer evening; the horror of the gangrene that follows a bungled operation; the sights and smells of the narrow streets in Rouen that stifle Charles and stimulate Emma - ...
>
> Scents evoke a whole background: the smell of tar in Rouen docks, the aroma of incense... or the 'odeur d'iris et de draps humides' from the cupboard in the Rouault kitchen....

She then moves on to the sense-impression of light:

> Above all, Flaubert can convey the quality of light playing at odd angles on the texture of surfaces, as with... the shaft that touches the ashes in the kitchen fireplace ('le jour qui descendait par la cheminée, veloutant la suie de la plaque, bleuissait un peu les cendres froides'),...[1]

The intrinsic beauty of the everyday world is conveyed through these finely observed sense-impressions which are not only a means of characterising people and their surroundings, but also reveal something of Flaubert's own acute sensibilities.

In my thesis I propose to go a good deal further and to show what it is, exactly, that these sense-impressions do. Are they merely the acute observations of a highly perceptive artist or are they something more? What do they reveal of Flaubert's particular kind of consciousness - what, in fact, is individual about them?

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1. A. Fairlie, Flaubert: Madame Bovary, Studies in French Literature 8, Edward Arnold, 1962, pp.22-3.

Of vital importance for an understanding of Flaubert's artistic sensibilities is the fact that his nervous disposition conditioned his awareness of the sensory world to a very great degree.[1] His already fine sensibilities became heightened through a nervous disorder diagnosed by some as a mild form of epilepsy, known as 'petit mal'. From his early twenties, when he had the first attack, his life was completely changed - he withdrew from the world and lived the life of a recluse in Croisset. His brother related how in January 1844, he and Gustave had been driving in the evening along a country road near Pont L'Evêque. As a farmer's cart approached he suddenly fell unconscious to the floor where he remained for several hours, as if dead. When he recovered, he spoke of visions of swirling lights. This was the first of a series of attacks which recurred over a period of ten years. He frequently described his symptoms in letters to his friends:

> Chaque attaque était comme une sorte d'hémorrhagie de l'innervation. C'était des pertes séminales de la faculté pittoresque du cerveau, cent mille images sautant à la fois en feux d'artifices. Il y avait un arrachement de l'âme d'avec le corps atroce (J'ai la conviction d'être mort plusieurs fois).....[2]

As he himself confesses, he deliberately makes use in his literary work of the heightened perceptions these attacks gave him.

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1. See R. Dumesnil, Gustave Flaubert, L'Homme et l'oeuvre, Desclée de Brouwer 1947, (first published 1905), pp. 450-5 and pp. 477-495.

2. G. Flaubert, Correspondance, Letter to Louise Colet, 7 July 1853, 3me série, Conard, p.279.

> Ma maladie de nerfs... m'a fait connaître de curieux phénomènes psychologiques dont personne n'a l'idée, ou plutôt que personne n'a sentis. Je m'en vengerai à quelque jour en l'utilisant dans un livre...[1]

His great friend Maxime Du Camp was of the opinion that this nervous disorder detracted from his literary potential, preventing him from reaching the heights of which he might otherwise have been capable.

> Gustave Flaubert a été un écrivain d'un talent rare, sans le mal nerveux dont il fut saisi, il eût été un homme de génie.[2]

On the other hand, one may hold the view that these hallucinatory-like visions of dazzling light, falling sensations and all the heightened sensory awareness that went with them, add to his writing a kind of exactitude and insight that otherwise they might not have had. J.C. Lapp in a study of this aspect of

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1. G. Flaubert, Correspondance, Letter to Louise Colet, 31 March 1853, p. ~~230~~. 146.

2. Quoted in R. Dumesnil, Gustave Flaubert, L'Homme et l'oeuvre. Letter from M. Du Camp, Souvenirs littéraires, vol.1, pp.80-5.

Flaubert's work[1] discusses various types of hallucinations and the connection between, for example, certain sensations experienced by Emma in Madame Bovary and those experienced by Flaubert himself. He also sees a connection between the frequent use of such verbs as 'tourbillonner' and 'bouillonner' and these states of hyper-sensitivity.

Two further aspects of his consciousness deserve mention - his attention to the visual world which is borne out by the mass of references to the sense-impressions of texture, colour and light on the one hand, and his hyper-awareness of irregularities of movement, the fluctuating quality of light on shimmering surfaces and contrasting effects of light and shade, movement and immobility, sound and silence, on the other. This type of duality, almost a sense of lack of stability, is clearly connected with his nervous disorder. It is also reminiscent of the sense of constant flux in Virginia Woolf's experience of the world due to her mental instability. I shall discuss

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1. J.A. Lapp, 'Art and Hallucination in Flaubert', French Studies, Oct. 1956, pp. 322-333.

this in greater detail later.

In my analysis of the texts, some very interesting points arise which, I believe, are all linked, directly or indirectly, with Flaubert's nervous disorder and the particular vision it gave him. Apart from the actual sensations and visions mentioned above, there is a peculiar awareness of the infinite in connection with emotional states, whether boundless happiness or endless misery, which seems to me to be connected with the heightened sensitivity his seizures gave him. This concept of the infinite is not only seen in references to feelings of love or depression, but in connection with a vast range of subjects - from street-lamps which cast endless reflections in the Seine at night to ribbons which flutter perpetually in the breeze. Even scents are described as being 'indéfinissable', i.e. it is beyond one's powers to define them precisely. All these references seem to me to have a strong emotive quality and are particularly significant in revealing something individual about Flaubert's consciousness.

Movement figures largely in Flaubert's references to sense-impressions, which, bearing in mind the points made above[1], one would naturally expect.

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1. See p.33

Frequent allusions to the movement of light as it falls on the smooth, shiny surface of 'soie gorge-de-pigeon' and his taste for such terms as 'onde' and 'onduler', used both literally and metaphorically, indicate an acute awareness of movement. The inter-relation between movement and sound is also an interesting one.

If we imagine the passage of a carriage, for example the noise of its wheels, the sound of the horses' hoofs and the straining of the harness are all caused by the motion of the carriage. Does not Frédéric watch:

> ...des calèches, (qui) défilaient près de lui,... avec un balancement insensible qui faisait craquer les cuirs vernis....

After coming to a halt, the carriages start off again:

> ...les roues se mettaient à tourner plus vite, le macadam grinçait;...
> (ES 40-1)

Seen from another angle, the regular movement of a carriage or a horse as it travels, produces a kind of rhythm of its own, which writers and even musicians have found conducive to artistic creation. Mozart liked to compose while travelling in a carriage, Byron

found horse-riding helpful when composing verse; maybe Flaubert, who declined to go on foot, even in the country[1] subconsciously transmitted this sense of motion in his many accounts of journeys by carriage and, characteristically, his exaggerated degree of sensitivity to irregularities of surface.

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1. Maxime De Camp relates how Flaubert's way of life became conditioned by his nervous seizures:

> À ce paroxysme où tout l'être entrait en trépidation, succédait invariablement un sommeil profond et une courbature qui duraient pendant plusieurs jours. Cela explique bien des excentricités que l'on a souvent reprochées à Flaubert; jamais il ne sortait qu'en voiture et toute promenade à pied lui était antipathique. Il avait établi en principe 'la marche est délétère';.... Il ne se sentait en sécurité que dans les appartements.

Quoted in R. Dumesnil, Gustave Flaubert. L'Homme et L'Oeuvre, pp. 481-2.

The visual world was one that held great fascination for Flaubert - whether it was in the physical beauty of nature, in the sensuous attraction of women, in lamp-lit river-side scenes or Paris streets, or in the brilliance of elegantly dressed people at social gatherings. The way in which he uses sense-impressions in these contexts is again most interesting and even unexpected. Several elements can be observed - a use of colour and light which ~~is reminiscent of~~ the Impressionist school of painting, a manner of presenting scenes and characters which has been compared with 'cinema technique', and the very individual use of sense-impressions as an indirect means of characterisation. From the purely stylistic point of view, there is a certain use of imagery related to textures in the sophisticated 'salon' and in domestic life which is not only striking but finds a parallel in Virginia Woolf's use of imagery.

anticipates.

To examine Flaubert's techniques and those of the Impressionist painters, it is necessary first to place the latter chronologically. The first version of L'Éducation sentimentale was started in 1843.

Madame Bovary was finished in 1856 and the final version of L'Éducation sentimentale was published in 1869. Flaubert died in 1880.

The group of artists, later to be known as the 'Impressionists', began to meet and discuss their theories between 1866 and 1870. They held their first exhibition in 1874 and the Movement began to disintegrate in 1886. The group owed its name to the fact that its members tried to suggest their 'impression' of the subject through the effects of light and colour, rather than portraying photographically. They are known for the light, soft quality of their colours and their love of watery, misty scenes.

As can be seen from these dates, Flaubert preceded them chronologically but this is all the more interesting because, as I mentioned at the beginning of the Introduction, Flaubert seemed in many ways to be the precursor of the whole trend of 'Modern' art in its broadest sense. There appear many similarities in, for example, Flaubert's treatment of light as it is reflected in a river, in the hazy evening twilight, night scenes in Paris streets with the yellowish-reddish glow from lighted windows and groups of sophisticated people in an array of fine clothes, but whose features are not individualised. Are not these scenes reminiscent of an Utrillo or a Renoir?

Is it not also an extraordinary coincidence that the artist Monet created a series of paintings of Rouen cathedral in 1894, set at different times of the day in different kinds of light, while Flaubert, nearly forty years previously, in his writing of Madame Bovary, had been equally attracted by the majesty of this cathedral? It was here that Emma and Léon were to meet. He, too, draws attention to the light as it falls on the gray stonework:

> ... la lumière qui arrivait obliquement sur la cathédrale posait des miroitements à la cassure des pierres grises;... (MB 284)

P. Danger has examined at great length Flaubert's descriptions of nature and drawn many interesting parallels between his treatment of light and colour and that of the Impressionists:

> ... en lisant ces magnifiques pages de L'Éducation sentimentale où le soir tombe sur la Seine qui se déchire 'en moires d'argent contre les piles des ponts',... comment s'empêcher d'évoquer telle toile de Marquet, ou bien encore de Monet dans cette douceur des paysages de Fontainebleau...[1]

He also examines another aspect of the way Flaubert presents visual images - his 'cinema-technique'.[2] It can

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1. P. Danger, Sensations et Objets dans le Roman de Flaubert, Armand Colin, 1973, p.86 ff.

2. ...les éléments sensoriels sont mis en oeuvre par l'auteur dans la continuité et le mouvement d'une action que se déroule sous nos yeux comme les images successives d'un film.

   Ibid., p.186.

be observed in 'long shots' of a total scene or 'close-ups', or in the camera as it follows various characters; it is a technique which is well illustrated in some sections of my analysis. The scene on board the 'Ville-de-Montereau' at the beginning of L'Éducation sentimentale is a particularly good example. The camera is first directed at the general activity on board, then turned to Frédéric in a 'close-up shot and then back to the ship as it leaves port. Scenes on the river-banks as they glide by are presented and then another 'close-up' as M. Arnoux is picked out from among his companions in all the glory of his extravagant get-up. This technique can be traced indefinitely in this first chapter and also on numerous subsequent occasions - in the Paris streets, at parties, at the races.

Just as much has been written about Flaubert from the point of view of plot, characterisation, structure and style, in the same way extensive studies have been made of the writings of James Joyce. These include analyses of his concept of the artist, his particular vision of life, his picture of Ireland, his exposition of the Catholic doctrines and his preoccupation with language. But here, as in the case of Flaubert, there seems to be a conspicuous lack of any study devoted exclusively to Joyce's awareness of sense-impressions as such.

Harry Levin provides us with much that is informative about Joyce as an artist and touches on the subject of the impact of the sensory world on the writer as a young boy:

> Joyce is the most self-centred of universal minds... he exploited his personal experience for purposes of literary documentation. His youth in Dublin, subject to the limitations of poor eyesight, the perceptions of acute hearing, the exaggerations of immaturity, the natural bonds of emotion and unnatural tensions of resistance, furnished his only subject-matter.[1]

From his own experience of life he reached out to find a language which would correspond to these sensations. Harry Levin defines his role as an artist as follows:

> Joyce's own contribution to English prose is to provide a more fluid medium for refracting sensations and impressions through the author's mind - to facilitate the transition from photographic realism to esthetic impressionism. In the introductory pages of the Portrait of the Artist, a reader is faced with nothing less than the primary impact of life itself, a presentational continuum of the tastes and smells and sights and sounds of earliest infancy. Emotion is integrated, from first to last, by words. Feelings, as they filter through Stephen's sensory apparatus, become associated with phrases.[2]

It is obvious that sense-impressions are to play an important role in the picture of reality Joyce strives to convey. In Flaubert we noticed how his particular sensitivity to and awareness of human relationships and beauty in nature was expressed, to a great extent, in terms of sense-impressions. In Joyce we have an artist

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1. H. Levin, James Joyce: A Critical Introduction, p.16.
2. Ibid., p.42.

with equally keen perceptions but, as the analysis will show, he was far less receptive to visual images: colour, light and visible texture. This was certainly due to the 'limitations of poor eyesight' which, after the publication of Ulysses, turned gradually to complete blindness.[1] It is natural that his consciousness should reveal itself principally in an acute awareness of sound. The sense of smell, touch, heat and cold are also much more frequently apparent than in Flaubert's writing. Another facet of his work - the intellectual processes which go side by side with the way in which he responds to sense-impressions - is something that emerges most forcibly in the course of the analysis.

First, Joyce's receptivity to sound: not only was he aware of sounds as such but he had the musician's ear for the melody and beauty inherent in language. It is known that he had even considered taking up singing, for he had an excellent tenor voice. He was also an extra-ordinarily good linguist. He spoke fluent French, German and Italian and was familiar with a great number of other languages. In Finnegans Wake he borrows words from seventeen languages including Greek, Sanscrit, Ancient Irish and Russian. He even uses dialect and slang:

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1. Le monde visuel devint pour lui peu à peu un monde de souvenirs où ceux de son enfance prédominaient nécessairement. Il fit consciemment ce que la plupart des hommes subissent simplement.

   M. Butor, 'Petite croisière préliminaire à une reconnaissance de l'Archipel Joyce', Essais sur les Modernes, Gallimard, 1971, p.269.

> Sur le vieux fond d'anglais, Joyce intègre tous les provincialismes et tous les défauts de prononciation, il multiplie les néologismes et les formations argotiques, bloque les mots et les contracte, obtenant ainsi une vertigineuse densité d'expression.[1]

His feeling for language is something that characterises all his work. A progression can be traced from the young boy's simple statement in Dubliners ('The Sisters') that the word 'paralysis' had always attracted him like other words of Greek origin, to the comment in A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man that the young Stephen listened avidly to all the political discussion going on round him and:

> Words which he did not understand he said over and over to himself till he had learned them by heart: and through them he had glimpses of the real world about them. (PAYM 64)

In Ulysses Joyce has succeeded in creating a language of his own to express most closely the many-sidedness of the sensory and intellectual world as it sifted through his consciousness. Even conventional forms of spelling, grammar and syntax have been abandoned. The following extract from 'The Oxen of the Sun' illustrates this.

> All off for a buster, armstrong, hollering down the street. Bonafides. Where you slep las nigh? Timothy of the battered noggin. Like ole Billyo. Any brollies or gumboots in the fambly?... Get a spurt on...Proceed to nearest canteen... Beer, beef, business, bibles, bulldogs, battleships, buggery and bishops.....Thunderation! (U 421)

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1. Ibid., p.264.

In Finnegans Wake he reaches the culmination of this completely individual use of words in such expressions as: "'Wallalhoo, Wallalhoo, mourn is plein' which, according to M. Butor, could mean either 'Waterloo, Waterloo, morne plaine' or 'Wallalha, Wallalha, le deuil est complet' or 'Wallalha, Wallalha, la lune est pleine![1]

In my thesis I have not attempted an analysis of Ulysses or Finnegans Wake for it seemed to me that the role played by language in these works is of over-riding importance and is no longer associated with sound purely as a sense-impression. I have included a few references to Ulysses but, though sensory experience certainly plays a part in that work, I have not attempted to make a detailed study of it, for its complexity and volume would entail a kind of analysis which would not be strictly related to my subject.

In Dubliners and A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, which I have taken as my texts, the musical and poetic qualities are what give them their particular beauty and also their originality. A favourite device is the picking up of a motif, invariably

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1. M. Butor, 'Petite croisière préliminaire à une reconnaissance de l'Archipel Joyce', Essais sur les Modernes, p.265.

associated with a sense-impression, and repeating it within the same passage or in slightly different form later on. In so doing, Joyce creates a kind of unity within the work in much the same way that a theme in a piece of music or a refrain in a song or poem is repeated at intervals, or reappears with certain variations. The atmosphere on a drowsy summer evening with the sound of cricket being played in the distance, is evoked through repetition of the onomatopoeic 'pick, pack, pock, puck', quoted slightly differently on each occasion. A sense of Christmas festivity and bounty is created through repeated allusions to the red and green colour of the holly and ivy decorations; and the intensely feminine attractiveness of the young girl Stephen loves is suggested by the fragrance of the 'sprays' of her fresh warm breath (which) flew gaily above her cowled head...' This passage appears again at the end of the novel. Joyce in expressing his awareness of sense-impressions also resorts to the musician's and poet's technique of repetition, alliteration and onomatopoeia.

Another quality of Joyce's writing associated with his awareness of sense-impressions, and where his use of language is very much that of the poet, is his emotive use of epithets, particularly in connection with

smell. There is the 'strange solemn smell' in the rector's study at Clongowes, the 'peaceful odour of Mrs. Dillon' in 'An Enconnter' (Dubliners) and a 'personal odour' in Mr. Kernan's sickroom in 'Grace' (Dubliners). These isolated examples point to an individual use of language, subsequently developed to a high degree in his later works.

Perhaps the most striking point that emerges in the analysis of Joyce's texts is his intellectualism. It is something that differentiates him decisively from Flaubert. The way in which his awareness of sense-impressions makes its impact on the reader is necessarily very different and one becomes conscious of another process at work. A single sense-impression or sometimes a synthesis of them, awakens a train of thought or a series of memories. Sometimes the process is reversed and an idea or thought leads back to a series of sense-impressions, thus conveying the sense of a total experience. As A Portrait develops, sense-impressions come to be used more and more figuratively to convey abstract concepts such as a moment of inspiration, the human soul, and the artist's call to exile.

A characteristic of Joyce's consciousness closely related to his awareness of sense-impressions is

his experience of what he terms 'epiphanies'. A moment of reality is crystallised and isolated from time:

> When the relation of the parts is exquisite, when the parts are adjusted to a special point, we recognise that it is that thing which it is. Its soul, its whatness, leaps to us from the vestment of appearances. The soul of the commonest object, the structure of which is so adjusted, seems to us radiant. [1]

An example can be found in A Portrait where the sight of a young girl at the water's edge with her pure sensuous beauty, her bird-like softness, fills Stephen with joy - it is a moment of affirmation of life, love and his sense of vocation:

> To live, to err, to fall, to triumph, to recreate life out of life! A wild angel had appeared to him, the angel of mortal youth and beauty,... to throw open before him in an instant of ecstasy the gates of all the ways of error and glory... (PAYM 176)

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1. J. Joyce, Stephen Hero, ed. T. Spencer, J. Slocum and H. Cahoon, Norfolk, Conn. 1963, p.213.

This 'instant of ecstasy' which is to stay fixed indelibly in his consciousness is an 'epiphany'.

Interesting parallels can be found in Virginia Woolf and even in Flaubert, though I feel that in his case, they were more in the nature of visions.[1]

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1. According to R.K. Cross, (Flaubert and Joyce. The Rite of Fiction, pp. 22-4)

> In Un Coeur simple the author endows the commonplace with immense significance, anticipating Joyce's art of the epiphany...
>
> The story ends with Félicité on the brink of death, confusing a stuffed parrot with the Holy Spirit:
>
> > Les mouvements de son coeur se ralentirent un à un... et, quand elle exhala son dernier souffle, elle crut voir, dans les cieux entr'ouverts, un perroquet gigantesque, planant au-dessus de sa tête. (TC 47)
>
> Cross interprets Flaubert's treatment of this scene in the following terms:
>
> > Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God in an incarnation they can comprehend. Flaubert's epiphany reveals an astonishing imaginative daring.
>
> The outstanding difference between this particular epiphany of Flaubert's and Joyce's many epiphanies lies in the fact that Joyce clearly experienced them himself, while Flaubert is detached from this experience of Félicité's.

The patterning of events through a series of epiphanies has been studied by Avrom Fleishman in his critical work on Virginia Woolf. He alludes to the role they play in Mrs. Dalloway, To the Lighthouse and especially in The Years, where he makes a detailed list of references to as many as fifteen outstanding 'ephiphanies'. He considers them central to the structure of the novel:

> With one exception, the sections of The Years are constructed with an epiphany as an end-in-view, although some have more than one such moment. The stimulus for widened awareness of or intense concern for meaning in life is most often a visit by one character to another or to a series of people and places.[1]

By way of conclusion, a comment can be made about the different type of artistic consciousness revealed by Flaubert's and Joyce's references to sense-impressions. Flaubert, and consequently the characters he creates, though they experience a whole range of emotions and are receptive to the sensory world about them, still seem to be essentially observers for whom

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1. A. Fleishman, Virginia Woolf, A Critical Reading, p.178.
   For references to 'epiphanies', see Ibid., pp. 93, 115, 120, 178-97.

sense-impressions are something outside themselves. Joyce, on the other hand, seems to absorb the outer world, and the strong impact that sensory experience makes on him is transformed through a logical association of ideas into a very individual literary form. These differences are dealt with in detail in the analysis.

While Flaubert and Joyce were to some extent reacting against certain social or religious conventions of their time, Virginia Woolf was very much a part of the contemporary literary scene as a member of the Bloomsbury set. From 1846 onwards, Flaubert had withdrawn to Croisset where much of what he wrote, in particular Madame Bovary, laid bare the mediocrity of the bourgeois class:

> ... le recours de Flaubert fut d'affirmer un retrait absolu du vivre dans les livres, de faire passer dans la totalité de la littérature la vacuité de la "vie bourgeoise".
> [1]

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1. J. Neefs, Madame Bovary de Flaubert, Classiques Hachette, 1972, p.5.

Joyce in renouncing all ties with Ireland and Catholicism was reacting against any social or religious creed which would stifle artistic expression:

> I will tell you what... I will not do. I will not serve that in which I no longer believe, whether it call itself my home, my fatherland or my church: and I will try to express myself in some mode of life or art as freely as I can and as wholly as I can, ..
> (PAYM 251)

Virginia Woolf was perhaps more fortunate in that she was born into an intellectual world of highly cultured and creative people. Her father was Leslie Stephen, scholar, historian and literary critic. Her sister Vanessa was a painter who married the art critic Clive Bell. She associated with such people as Roger Fry the artist and critic, Duncan Grant, another painter, Lytton Strachey the writer and historian, Maynard Keynes the economist and many others who made up the celebrated Bloomsbury set. Nigel Nicolson comments on this group:

> People seem to have got the idea that Bloomsbury was narrow in its interests, but I don't suppose there were ever wider minds than theirs. They embraced the whole of human activity, they were interested in everything.... They worked awfully hard.

Continued....

> They all had a great sense of dedication, and their fun was always qualified by a serious intent. Life wasn't grim - life was tremendously exciting - but the purpose of life was to achieve something new and permanently valuable in your own field. And they did not only set this up as a standard. They achieved it.[1]

The stimulating intellectual atmosphere and close contact with writers, scientists and particularly, painters and art-critics, deeply influenced Virginia Woolf. Her writing, in addition to presenting the flux of life through a synthesis of sense-impressions, sensations and thoughts, moving freely in time and space, also illustrates many characteristics prevalent in the visual arts at the time. She, like Flaubert, has handed down to us a great deal of informative biographical material - Flaubert in his extensive Correspondance and Virginia Woolf in her diaries and letters. From these we have

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1. Quoted by Janet Watts in a review of V. Woolf, The Flight of the Mind, ed. N. Nicolson, in the 'Arts Guardian', 16.9.75.

been able to learn much about their literary aims.

A correspondence she carried on with the French artist Jacques Raverat points to some of Virginia Woolf's most basic ideas on the art of writing. Whereas painting reached the viewer's consciousness through a simultaneity of effects, writing was thought to be 'essentially linear' - one word following another, one event succeeding another. Virginia Woolf quotes such writers as Bennett and Galsworthy as exponents of this method. She, however, sees a relation between the painter's and the writer's method for it was the writer's task, according to her, to go beyond the 'formal railway line of sentence'. The literary artist had to realise that:

> ... people don't and never did feel or think or dream for a second in that way; but all over the place,....
> [1]

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1. Q. Bell, Virginia Woolf. A Biography, Vol. II, 1912-1941. Triad, Paladin, St. Albans, 1976. pp. 106-7.

In other words, she thought it was possible to describe in a novel events, processes of thought and feeling, out of time.

> The technique which enables a writer to convey the simultaneity of experience rather than a series of events, set in logical sequence, is what Virginia Woolf calls the 'radial' technique. To quote again the correspondence with Raverat, if a pebble were thrown into a pond:
>
> > ...there are splashes in the outer air in every direction, and under the surface waves that follow one another into dark and forgotten corners...
> > [1]

This concept of a central idea from which radiate a variety of associated thoughts and sensations is basic to all her writing. It will be illustrated in my analysis.

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1. Ibid., p.106.

These were some of the people and ideas that influenced Virginia Woolf and contributed to the highly individual technique which she evolved to convey her own experience of reality. By nature over-sensitive, she also suffered a series of complete nervous breakdowns (in 1895 after her mother's death, in 1904 after her father's, in 1910) and intermittent periods of madness between 1913 and 1941 when she committed suicide. According to Leonard Woolf, her illness was 'manic-depressive insanity.'[1] Her symptoms were a strange mixture of exhaustion, insomnia, states of excitement, depression, guilt, disgust at food, even sensations of physical pain. The most terrifying aspect of her illness was that she was conscious of its approach, struggled against it and, during its course, was 'terribly sane in three-quarters of her mind.'[2] As she records in her diary on September 15, 1926:

> Woke up perhaps at 3. Oh it's beginning, it's coming - the horror - physically like a painful wave swelling about the heart - tossing me up. I'm unhappy, unhappy! Down - God, I wish I were dead....
> Wave crashes... I can't face this horror any more...[3]

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1. L. Woolf, Beginning Again: An autobiography of the Years 1911-1918, Hogarth Press, 1964, p.161.

2. Ibid., p.164.

3. Quoted in Q. Bell, Virginia Woolf: A Biography, Vol.II, p.110.

The association between her feeling of rising panic and the movement of waves is very real.

As many of the characteristics in Flaubert's writing, in particular his hyper-awareness of sense-impressions, owe much to his nervous disposition, so in Virginia Woolf, her mental instability has left its mark on the type of artistic consciousness revealed in her work. Her technique was a deliberate attempt to express reality outside the confines of time and space - there were to be no conventionally accepted methods of imposing a fixed or stable framework. Her comments in her diary while planning Mrs. Dalloway give us a good insight into her ideas on the subject:

> Yet I am now and then haunted by some semi-mystic very profound life of a woman, which shall all be told on one occasion; and time shall be utterly obliterated; future shall somehow blossom out of the past. One incident - say the fall of a flower - might contain it. My theory being that the actual event practically does not exist - nor time either....[1]

The references to sense-impressions intensify the sense of fluidity which characterises Virginia Woolf's style. She is acutely aware of texture, colour and light which are often accompanied by a sense of light, fleeting movement. She shows a definite taste for the fine, filmy texture of gauze and muslin,

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1. AWD, November 23, 1926, p.102.

mentioned repeatedly in description of women and young girls, and there is a wealth of imagery in which mists, clouds, damp atmosphere and hazy evening light are likened to 'gauze' and 'veils'. The same attraction to evanescent qualities is typified by the image of the butterfly which she seems to have loved. This delicate, clear-coloured, fluttering, ephemeral creature seems to convey something very basic in Virginia Woolf's consciousness. She expresses her admiration for Proust in the following terms:

> The thing about Proust is his combination of utmost sensibility with the utmost tenacity. He searches out these butterfly shades to the last grain. He is as tough as cat-gut and as evanescent as a butterfly's bloom.[1]

This liking for the tough and firm and at the same time the evanescent is echoed in Lily Briscoe's feeling about painting - it should be:

> ... on the surface feathery and evanescent,... but beneath the fabric must be clamped together with bolts of iron. (TL 198)

It also appears on countless other occasions where characters such as Rhoda in The Waves and Septimus Warren Smith in Mrs. Dalloway consciously reach out to touch a solid, physical object as they feel their sense of identity leaving them. All these features are, I think, definitely related to Virginia Woolf's own

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1. AWD, April 8, 1925, p.72.

sensations of instability and the need for security. Her brother-in-law, Clive Bell, has criticised this particular characteristic in her writing, rather humorously, in a letter he sent her in October 1908:

> To give a sense of matter need one make so much use of words like 'solid' and 'block' - they become irritating: imaginings too, must they glimmer and shimmer always or be quite so often 'shadowy'.[1]

A sense of the lack of stability also runs through the extensive water-imagery in which movement and often sound convey the idea of flux. Traffic in Mrs. Dalloway is seen rushing like 'water round the piers of a bridge' and life itself is like a glacier rolling everything down in its course. In To the Lighthouse, Lily Briscoe feels life to be like a wave which dashes her on to the beach and in The Waves Louis, Rhoda and even Jinny refer to the sea as the symbol of life, catching them up in its waves. Jinny identifies being 'buffetted' by the sea with the excitement and activity of life, Louis feels dread at the 'thud' of the waves on the shore and Rhoda repeatedly sees herself drowning.

The recurring image of the sea in The Waves leads us to what is perhaps the most outstanding feature of Virginia Woolf's writing - the patterning of motifs and symbols through repeated images. Sense-impressions play a fundamental role in the portrayal of these images. In Mrs. Dalloway the motif of Big Ben striking symbolises the concept of clock-time as against psychological time.

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1. Q. Bell, Virginia Woolf: A Biography, Vol.I, p.208.

The sense-impression is one of sound but it gains particular force by being described in visual terms: 'The leaden circles dissolved in the air'. Colour and movement are indicated and the image of eddies of water circling ever wider and wider till they disappear. The feeling conveyed is one of relentlessness and finality.

In The Waves we find the culmination of this technique. The red carnation table-decoration comes to symbolise the friendship of the separate individuals who gather together on two different occasions. The movement of the sea, depicted at different times of the day in varying types of light and in different moods, echoes the phases in the lives of the characters - moving through childhood to old age.

This particular use of sense-impressions is not like either Flaubert's or Joyce's. Flaubert's references are to minutely observed sense-impressions used in their literal sense, and only occasionally in rather conventional imagery. Joyce uses them, often figuratively, to express sensory experience and associated thoughts and sensations following in an intellectual and logical sequence.

Virginia Woolf also uses them to express her reactions to the sensory world, her thoughts and feelings, in both literal and figurative terms, but she goes a good deal farther than this. She wants to present the whole flux of life as it impinges on the mind in myriads of largely visual images, independent of logical reasoning. The

movement between past, present and future is achieved in such a way that the transition is scarcely perceptible. It is to a great extent her use of motifs, closely related to sense-impressions, which makes all this process possible. As with Joyce, it was practically impossible to isolate single sense-impressions so as to make sharply defined categories, for Virginia Woolf produces her effects through a kind of introspection in which there is a total synthesis of sensory and intellectual experience.

Turning over in one's mind these three writers, each highly aware of sense-impressions, yet each equipped with a very different type of consciousness, one wonders if there is not some feature common to all three, which might help one to put each in perspective. I believe there is one characteristic in their writing with, in fact, a very physical basis, which is pertinent.

A particular sensory experience, the sensation of falling, occurs in the works of all three writers and in each case is charged with emotive qualities. This sensation is closely related to their nervous and physical make-up, and consequently also their artistic consciousness. In the portrayal of this particular state, sense-impressions play a vital role. Flaubert's characters, while in states of emotional shock, suspense or despair, are often described as being aware of dazzling, swirling lights and experiencing a sense of sinking into bottomless depths. Joyce refers to his characters' 'swooning', though for him this is identified with sensations

of joy, erotic experience and the artist's ecstatic sense of vocation. For Virginia Woolf, panic and mental instability are expressed in images of brilliant light and colour, flames and a sense of falling, often into the depths of the sea.

To clarify these points further, we may look at some relevant passages. Mme. Arnoux, in L'Éducation sentimentale, when she mistakenly believes Frédéric to be engaged to Louise Roque:

> ... suffoquait un peu. Elle s'approcha de la fenêtre pour respirer...
> Il lui semblait descendre dans quelque chose de profond, qui n'en finissait plus... (ES 271)

and Mâtho, in Salammbô, in a state of unbelievable suspense once he has discovered Salammbô's chamber:

> ... effleurait les dalles incrustées d'or, de nacre et de verre; et malgré la polissure du sol, il lui semblait que ses pieds enfonçaient comme s'il eût marché dans les sables..(S 88)

In Madame Bovary, as Emma returns crestfallen from her visit to Rodolphe, from whom she had hoped for financial help, her despair and confusion are described in the following terms:

> Elle resta perdue de stupeur,...
> Le sol sous ses pieds était plus mou qu'une onde, et les sillons lui parurent d'immenses vagues brunes, qui déferlaient. Tout ce qu'il y avait dans sa tête de réminiscences, d'idées, s'échappait à la fois, du'un seul bond, comme les mille pièces d'un feu d'artifice...
> Il lui sembla tout à coup que les globules couleur de feu éclataient dans l'air comme des balles fulminantes en s'aplatissant, et tournaient, tournaient,.... (MB 369)

From these quotations it is clear how closely these sensations and states of mind resemble Flaubert's own, on certain occasions, as he has described them in his Correspondance.

Joyce's references to 'swooning' reveal a temperament and artistic consciousness very different from Flaubert's. In A Portrait, Stephen's desire for sexual initiation drives him to the area frequented by prostitutes where:

> He stretched out his arms in the street to hold fast the frail, swooning form that eluded him and incited him:... (PAYM 102-3)

When he finds himself actually in the prostitute's arms:

> He closed his eyes, surrendered himself to her, body and mind, conscious of nothing in the world but the dark pressure of her softly parting lips. They pressed upon his brain as upon his lips.....; and between them he felt an unknown and timid pressure, darker than the swoon of sin, softer than sound or odour. (PAYM 104)

The sight of a young girl on the sea-shore confirms Stephen in his joyful acceptance of all that life is to bring him, and after resting in a 'sandy nook' while still in a half-sleeping, half-waking state, he begins to sense his vocation:

> He closed his eyes in the languor of sleep. His eyelids trembled...as if they felt the strange light of some new world. His soul was swooning into some new world, fantastic, dim, uncertain as under the sea, traversed by cloudy shapes and beings. (PAYM 176-7)

In his poem 'Alone'[1] Joyce describes rapture in the following terms:

> The sly reeds whisper to the night
> A name - her name -
> And all my soul is a delight,
> A swoon of shame.

His joy in erotic love is almost heightened by the shame. He had been conditioned as a boy by his strict Jesuit schooling to view this experience as a carnal sin.

The concept of the soul swooning is obviously deep in Joyce's consciousness. The feelings described, whether they are of eroticism, ecatatic self-realisation or (as in 'The Dead') of a state between waking and sleeping - are directly associated with the physical sensation of falling.

In Virginia Woolf's work, this emotional state is a terrifying one, and one which for Septimus Warren Smith in Mrs. Dalloway and Rhoda in The Waves, is equivalent to a sense of losing touch with reality. Septimus sees exaggeratedly brilliant colours and wave-like movement in the world about him and it is only his wife's presence that can give him some sense of security:

> Happily Rezia put her hand down with a tremendous weight on his knee so that he was weighted down,... or the excitement of the elm trees rising and falling,..... with all their leaves alight and the colour thinning and thickening from blue to the green of a hollow wave,....would have sent him mad. (MD 21-2)

Shortly before he commits suicide, his visions are described:

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1. J. Joyce, Pomes Penyeach, Faber and Faber, 1968, p.22.

> He was drowned, he used to say,... He would look over the edge of the sofa down into the sea...he would cry that he was falling down, down into the flames! (MD 125)

Rhoda, too, has an acute sense of falling and drowning and tries desperately to reassure herself by touching a hard object like a bed-rail or a wooden door. As a young girl she realises she will never be like her friends Susan and Jinny and so takes refuge in a world of her own:

> ... I will stretch my toes so they touch the rail at the end of the bed,... Now I cannot sink, cannot altogether fall through the thin sheet... Now I... hang suspended... Out of me now my mind can pour.... Oh, but I sink, I fall! ... Let me pull myself out of these waters... I am turned; I am tumbled; I am stretched among these long lights, these long waves.....(W 22-3)

The same image haunts her as she looks over a cliff in Spain:

> Rolling me over the waves will shoulder me under. Everything falls in a tremendous shower, dissolving me....
>
> Yet... that is the hard line of a cottage roof...Putting my foot to the ground I step gingerly and press my hand against the hard door of a Spanish inn. (W 177)

Are not these states reminiscent of Virginia Woolf's entries in her diary - the horror associated with the swell of oncoming waves?

In conclusion, it may be observed that there exist certain parallels in Flaubert's and Virginia Woolf's artistic consciousness, determined to a large degree by their physical and nervous reaction to experience. Joyce,

whose disposition was far more stable, entered into the world wholeheartedly; his artistic consciousness may be termed more 'earthbound'. A comment of Bachelard's seems appropriate in a summing up of Flaubert's and Virginia Woolf's artistic sensibility:

> ... L'être voué à l'eau est un être en vertige.[1]

and also V. Therrien's interpretation of Bachelard's attitude to this subject:

> ...toute image de vertige, parfois même de chute vertigineuse, doit tôt ou tard s'achever par la mort de l'eau, par quelque "naufrage".[2]

Did not Flaubert write to Mlle. Leroyer de Chantepie, saying of himself:

> ... il me semblait que mon moi sombrait comme un vaisseau sous la tempête.[3]

The combination of the sensations of giddiness, falling, drowning and loss of identity seem to indicate a definite type of consciousness which Virginia Woolf and to a lesser degree, Flaubert, both express in their work.

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1. G. Bachelard, L'Eau et les Rêves, p.9.

2. V. Therrien, La Révolution de Gaston Bachelard en Critique Littéraire, Editions Klincksieck, 1970, p.169.

3. G. Flaubert, Correspondance, (Quatrième Série 1854-61), Letter to Mlle. Leroyer de Chantepie, May 18, 1857, Conard, ~~Bibliothèque-Charpentier, 1925~~. p.180.

ANALYSIS

OF THE TEXTS

PART I

FLAUBERT

TEXTURE

Flaubert's style is one which concentrates on producing a series of visual images, rich in sense-impressions and which depict mainly scenes with people in a variety of different surroundings. It is natural that texture should play an important role in creating these scenes. What is interesting and particular to Flaubert is that his treatment of texture, relating generally to clothing and interiors, is an indirect method of characterisation of the wearers and inhabitants respectively. At the same time it also illustrates the narrator's awareness of certain aspects of textures: for example, the recurring allusion to 'soie' reveals something of Flaubert's own taste for the sensuous and opulent. In L'Éducation sentimentale, where the narrator and Frédéric are almost interchangeable, most of what is presented is seen from Frédéric's point of view and we are made conscious of how easily he is impressed by extravagant and wealthy appearances.

On the other hand, if we compare Balzac's method of introducing a character or describing an interior, we have a very different picture. Both tried to produce the illusion of reality but in a completely

different way.[1] Whereas Flaubert, when introducing a character, achieves his effects through selective use of detail relating mainly to texture, Balzac needs several pages to cover the same sort of subject. He too, mentions textures of clothing but adds a mass of other related information which may range from the historical implications of what the character is wearing to the effect he produces on the neighbourhood. M. Arnoux in L'Éducation sentimentale is introduced to us through Frédéric's eyes in the following way:

> C'était un gaillard d'une quarantaine d'années, à cheveux crépus. Sa taille robuste emplissait une jaquette de velours noir, deux émeraudes brillaient à sa chemise de batiste, et son large pantalon blanc tombait sur d'étranges bottes rouges, en cuir de Russie, rehaussées de dessins bleus. (20)

In about fifty words, through the effects of texture and colour, the image of a rather flamboyant, wealthy, eccentric gentleman is created. He cuts a dashing figure in his striking outfit with its jacket of black

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1. Cf. P. Danger, Sensations et objets dans le roman de Flaubert, Librairie Armand Colin, 1973, pp.84-5, for comparison of Balzac's method of documentation and Flaubert's particular use of description. 'Dans un roman de Balzac la technique est un peu celle d'un historien qui expose les différentes pièces d'un dossier dont le drame qui se joue est en quelque sorte la résultante.... Mais dans l'oeuvre de Flaubert, c'est à chaque page, à chaque paragraphe, du début jusqu'à la fin, que la description accompagne le récit, qu'elle en est la substance même et que, selon l'expression de Geneviève Bollème, elle est l'événement.'

velvet, white trousers, red leather Russian boots and the two emeralds on his shirt.

If we take a look at Le Cousin Pons and the way in which the old man is introduced, we find a style that is verbose and repetitive. It takes at least 1,400 words to describe who Pons is and to give us details of his appearance. Two hundred words are spent on his spencer alone and all its historical associations; the fact that he wore '...un habit verdâtre à boutons de métal blanc' is mentioned three times in almost identical wording. The description starts by informing us as to the precise time and date when this elderly man is seen walking down the boulevard des Italiens. Balzac then tells us about his facial expression and the reactions he produces upon the on-lookers. There follow details of his clothing and their historical associations, and memories roused in his audience on seeing the 'spencer', so characteristic of the 'Empire'. A description of his hat:

> un horrible chapeau de soie à quatorze francs, aux bords intérieurs duquel de hautes et larges oreilles imprimaient des marques blanchâtres, vainement combattues par la brosse,[1]

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1. H. de Balzac, Le Cousin Pons, Nelson, Paris, 1952, pp. 7-9. (First edition published 1847).

precedes a second and more detailed account of the ugliness and pitifulness of his face. Another description of his clothing follows - his trousers, his waistcoat, 'une énorme cravate en mousseline blanche dont le noeud prétentieux avait été cherché par un beau pour charmer "les femmes charmantes" de 1809', and so on.

Texture certainly plays a part in this portrayal of a pathetic old man, but the underlying sense is of something essentially human. Balzac, in his passion for life and literary creation, is carried away by his encyclopaedic knowledge, which he inserts indiscriminately, producing something we might not call artistically satisfying but which is rich in human feeling.

We may note a similar difference in method if we take two characteristic descriptions of interiors. Frédéric enters the Dambreuse residence:

> Un double escalier droit, avec un tapis rouge à baguettes de cuivre, s'appuyait contre des hautes murailles en stuc luisant. Il y avait, ... un bananier dont les feuilles larges retombaient sur le velours de la rampe. Deux candélabres de bronze tenaient des globes de porcelaine suspendus à des chaînettes; les soupiraux des calorifères béants exhalaient un air lourd: et l'on n'entendait que le tic tac d'une grande horloge, ... (37)

Texture predominates in this description but temperature and sound also contribute to the total effect which is one of luxury and calm. It is not necessary to describe

more than the first impressions Frédéric receives on entering - sufficient atmosphere is created for the reader to imagine the scene. Compare this brief description of about 75 words with the picture we are given of Topinard's home. It takes 350 words to describe the apartment, including details of the inmates' occupations in the different rooms, and after some miscellaneous pieces of information about the parents, the bedroom is laid before us in another 100 words, stating with:

> Cette chambre était tout le luxe de l'appartement. Le lit en acajou était orné de rideaux en calicot bleu, bordé de franges blanches...[1]

While Flaubert's description is evocative through highly selective use of detail, Balzac's is one rich in human interest, yet does not portray images appealing to any of the senses. Included in this description of a shabby apartment are a mass of assorted details such as,

> un faux grenier élevé de six pieds et couvert en zinc, avec un châssis à tabatière pour fenêtre. On y parvenait par un escalier en bois blanc appelé, dans l'argot du bâtiment, 'échelle de meunier'.

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1. H. de Balzac, Le Cousin Pons, p.365.

The wallpaper is described, not in visual terms, but according to its price:

> Ces trois pièces, carrelées en briques, tendues d'affreux papier à six sous le rouleau,

and their dishes are described in similar terms:

> La vaisselle, en faïence brune et blanche, valait bien douze francs.[1]

All these points are informative but hardly create a clear picture in the mind's eye through stylistic skill. As S. Ullmann states:

> If one is thinking in terms of value judgements, then it cannot be denied that some outstanding novelists are indifferent stylists. Balzac's style had many flaws; Zola wrote, as André Gide once put it, with a badly sharpened pencil.[2]

To return more specifically to the treatment of texture in Flaubert's work, and more particularly in L'Éducation sentimentale, the subject can be divided into sections as follows:

(i) Texture and colour

(ii) Texture and movement

(iii) Texture and light

(iv) Texture and smell

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1. Ibid., pp. 362-3.

2. S. Ullmann, Style in the French Novel, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1964, p.260.

Section (i) can again be subdivided usefully into texture and colour related to (a) ladies' clothing

(b) men's clothing

(c) interiors, which also covers groups of people in social gatherings, where a general impression is conveyed rather than characterisation of an individual.

(i) a) Texture and colour in women's clothing

If we examine the descriptions of the various women as they appear during the work, with texture and colour in view, it is possible to gain a clear picture of their appearance and a sense of their personality merely by observing their clothing and the accessories associated with them. Tracing the scenes where Mme. Arnoux appears, for example, we shall find certain recurrent motifs, and a style of dress, which are in themselves a source for building up a pronounced impression of her character. The same will apply to the presentation of Mme. Dambreuse, Rosanette and Louise Roque.

The first glimpse we have of Mme. Arnoux is when we see her through Frédéric's eyes on board the 'Ville-de-Montereau'. She emerges in all her beauty and femininity through the details of her apparel, set against the blue of the sky:

> Elle avait un large chapeau de paille, avec des rubans roses... Ses bandeaux noirs, contournant la pointe de ses grands sourcils, descendaient très bas et semblaient presser amoureusement l'ovale de sa figure. Sa robe de mousseline claire, tachetée de petits pois, se répandait à plis nombreux; ...et...toute sa personne se découpait sur le fond de l'air bleu. (23)

While she is so exquistely dressed in fine muslin and light colours contrasting with the black of her hair,

her maid is mentioned only as wearing a scarf on her head. Mme. Arnoux's shawl is described 'à bandes violettes' with fringes, the significance of which is heightened for Frédéric by his imagining how its softness would have enveloped her on damp evenings, with the sea all around.

When Frédéric is invited to dine at the Arnoux's home, she appears in:

> ... une robe de velours noir et, dans les cheveux, une longue bourse algérienne en filet de soie rouge qui, s'entortillant à son peigne, lui tombait sur l'épaule gauche. (64)

The wealth and elegance he associates with her are reflected in the rich black velvet of her dress, offset by the red of her hair-net. We should note also Flaubert's predilection for silk. The terms 'soie', 'soie gorge-de-pigeon', 'moire' and 'satin' appear in his writing with almost obsessive repetition. He was drawn to them, no doubt, by their rich, soft texture, their association with the luxurious and refined and the particular way in which they reflect shimmering light.[1]

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1. For further examples of Flaubert's use of 'soie', 'soie gorge-de-pigeon', 'moire' and 'satin', see particularly:

   ES: pp. 27, 37-8, 63, 87, 98, 117, 135, 136, 137, 151, 171, 208, 226, 273, 281, 282-3, 283, 296, 356, 369, 375, 392, 442 (2 refs.)

   MB: pp. 20, 60, 67, 70, 101, 124, 232, 260, 278, 314, 343.

Continued on following page:

When Frédéric offers to accompany Mme. Arnoux through the streets to do some shopping:

> Elle...reparut avec une capote de velours, et une mante noire, bordée de petit-gris. (86)

As they walk along together, his sense of intoxication and isolation from the outside world intensified by the fog which partly shrouds them, he feels her arm and hand on his sleeve:

> ... il sentait à travers la ouate du vêtement la forme de son bras; et sa main, prise dans un gant chamois à deux boutons, sa petite main qu'il aurait voulu couvrir de baisers, s'appuyait sur sa manche. (86)

Footnote 1 continued from previous page:

S: p.89

TC: pp. 120, 128.

For references where these terms are used in imagery, see:

ES: pp. 41, 151, 177-8, 308.

The last reference (308), apart from emphasising Flaubert's obsessional preoccupation with silk, strikes one as being somewhat inapt:

> '...tout à coup, éclata derrière eux un bruit, pareil au craquement d'une immense pièce de soie qu'on déchire. C'était la fusillade du boulevard des Capucines.'

It has been pointed out by Alison Fairlie that Flaubert himself had mentioned how 'in his initial versions (of Madame Bovary) images seemed to hop through his sentences as irrepressibly as fleas.' He removed many but there still remain some that appear 'strained' or 'inappropriate' - the above example being one of them.
A. Fairlie, Flaubert: Madame Bovary, Studies in French Literature 8, Edward Arnold, 1969.

All these details of soft texture have connotations for Frédéric and through him, for the reader, of wealth and perfect taste. They also gain particular significance in Frédéric's eyes because in his ecstatically happy state, he is hypersensitive to everything around him. The same is true when, later, he walks through the streets alone, relating all he sees to Mme. Arnoux:

> Il regardait, le long des boutiques, les cachemires, les dentelles et les pendeloques de pierreries, en les imaginant drapés autour de ses reins, cousues à son corsage, faisant des feux dans sa chevelure noire..... dans la montre des cordonniers, les petites pantoufles de satin à bordure de cygne, semblaient attendre son pied; ... (87)

Frédéric is invited, on a later occasion, to Mme. Arnoux's name-day and buys a sunshade to replace the one he had broken:

> ... il découvrit une marquise en soie gorge-de-pigeon, à petit manche d'ivoire ciselé, et qui arrivait de la Chine. (98)

Its daintiness and exquisite good taste are most appropriate as are the sensuous qualities suggested by

the shot-silk. There is an interesting parallel in Madame Bovary where Emma also has a parasol of 'soie gorge-de-pigeon' (MB 20). Flaubert's obsession with 'soie' is borne out here too.

> At St. Cloud, when Mme. Arnoux appears, Frédéric's attention is first attracted by her shoes:
>
> > Elle avait de petites chaussures découvertes, en peau mordorée, avec trois pattes transversales, ce qui dessinait sur ses bas un grillage d'or. (100)

They are something essentially delicate and feminine. In L'Éducation sentimentale, Madame Bovary, Trois Contes and Salammbô, there are many examples of women's footwear, minutely described and carrying erotic over-tones. Salammbô's slippers are noticed by Mâtho as:

> ...de fines pantoufles en peau de serpent, (S 88)

and Hérodias wears:

> ...de petites pantoufles en duvet de colibri. (TC 128)

In Madame Bovary, Emma, in the hotel with Léon, wears:

> ... des pantoufles en satin rose, bordées de cygne. (MB 314)

One remembers the identical pair of slippers which Frédéric had seen in the shop windows in L'Éducation sentimentale (87: quoted above). Footwear in general, whether gentlemen's or ladies' was clearly a feature of a person's appearance that fascinated Flaubert; it

appears repeatedly as an aid to judging character.[1] It also appears associated with other sense-impressions, such as movement and sound, as for example, where Charles visits Emma's home:

> ...il aimait les petits sabots de Mlle Emma...; ses talons hauts la grandissaient un peu, et quand elle marchait devant lui, les semelles de bois, se relevant vite, claquaient avec un bruit sec contre le cuir de la bottine. (MB 20)

These details of the sounds of her walking add to the attraction and femininity of the young girl.

When Mme. Arnoux visits Frédéric at his home, unaccompanied by M. Arnoux, to ask Frédéric for a loan, everything about her appearance is charged with eroticism for Frédéric:

> Elle portait une robe de soie brune de la couleur d'un vin d'Espagne, avec un paletot de velours noir, bordé de martre: cette fourrure donnait envie de passer les mains dessus, et ses longs bandeaux, bien lissés, attiraient les lèvres. (208)

The warmth of the colours and the rich and sensuous quality of the materials add to Frédéric's feeling of adoration for her. Note again the characteristic introduction of 'soie'.

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1. See infra p. 90 for reference to the 'fortes bottes' worn by Charles in Madame Bovary. See also A. Fairlie's comment on people's footwear being 'made to fit their nature and moods: ...' in Flaubert: Madame Bovary, Studies in French Literature 8, 1969, p.78.

In direct contrast to Rosanette's provocative manners and style of dress, Mme. Arnoux at her country house at Auteuil:

> ....ne faisait rien pour exciter son amour, .. Pendant toute la saison, elle porta une robe de chambre en soie brune, bordée de velours pareil, vêtement large convenant à la mollesse de ses attitudes et à sa physionomie sérieuse. (296)

The warm, sombre colour and costly materials denote elegance and good taste and her attire seems symbolic of the woman of maturity and beauty that Frédéric sees in her. In fact, she appears so often in silk and velvet of brown or black colour that we wonder if she does not consciously identify her own warm yet highly self-controlled personality with this becoming but restrained style of dress. On the other hand, it could be Frédéric, or even Flaubert himself, who finds these particular aspects of her appearance attractive and indicative of her dignified character.

At Mme. Dambreuse's reception, Frédéric is confronted by both Mme. Arnoux and Mlle. Roque. He first notes Mme. Arnoux's attire:

> Elle portait une robe de barège noir, un cercle d'or au poignet, et comme le premier jour où il avait dîné chez elle, quelque chose de rouge dans les cheveux... (369)

As always, she is dressed in exquisitely good taste.

Mme. Dambreuse is solicitous on this occasion and Frédéric

notes, 'la pointe d'un soulier de satin noir'. Once more the recurrent motif of ladies' footwear carrying erotic overtones. It is significant that there is no mention of Mlle Roques(1) appearance - Frédéric is not attracted by her type of femininity; she even appears ridiculous beside the other sophisticated ladies.

After many years have passed, in 1867, Mme. Arnoux unexpectedly pays Frédéric a visit - her last visit:

> Dans la pénombre du crépuscule, il n'apercevait que ses yeux sous la voilette de dentelle noire qui masquait sa figure.
>
> Quand elle eut déposé au bord de la cheminée un petit portefeuille de velours grenat, elle s'assit. (447)

She is, as ever, discreetly dressed and whatever is associated with her is in perfect taste - in this case the wallet; in previous years it had been her sunshade. She had embroidered this wallet for him herself:

> Excusez-moi de n'être pas venue plus tôt (et désignant le petit portefeuille grenat couvert de palmes d'or:) Je l'ai brodé à votre intention, tout exprès. (447)

We note again the allusion to the colour black which she so often wears - in this case it is her veil - and the deep garnet-red of the velvet wallet with gold embroidery. In general, if we look at the passages describing her apparel and accessories, her warmth, graciousness and elegant taste are borne out by the predominance of rich textures of black and brown velvet with touches of red in various tones, fur-trimmings and hints of gold.

A very different type of woman is La Maréchale or Rosanette, seductive and intensely feminine. Frédéric who had already made her acquaintance at a party, decides to pay her a visit. She appears:

> ...enveloppée dans une sorte de peignoir en mousseline blanche, garnie de dentelles, pieds nus dans des babouches. (151)

He sees in her everything that is feminine and provocative, intensified by the light and dainty quality of her clothing and the softness of her bare feet. When she moves house, Frédéric observes her on another occasion as she enters:

> ...habillée d'une veste de satin rose, avec un pantalon de cachemire blanc, un collier de piastres, et une calotte rouge entourée d'une branche de jasmin. (281)

This extravagant, showy, rather senseless way of dressing is symbolic of her whole way of life. Conscious of her appeal to men, she wants to produce an effect.

The sensual, langorous image of Rosanette is completed by the description of the narghile pipe she is smoking:

> Le long serpent de maroquin rouge, qui formait des anneaux par terre, s'enroulait à son bras. Elle en appuyait le bec d'ambre sur ses lèvres, et regardait Frédéric... à travers la fumée... (281)

Later, feeling too hot,

> ... sans autre vêtement autour des reins que sa chemise de soie, elle inclinait la tête sur son épaule, .. (282-3)

Her clothing and movements are utterly provocative. Again we note the allusion to silk with all its connotations of sensuousness.

An incident full of dramatic irony occurs when Mme. Arnoux's property is put up for auction and Rosanette arrives to take advantage of it:

> .. en gilet de satin blanc à boutons de perles, avec une robe à falbalas, étroitement gantée... (442)

These details of her stylish, costly, rather flamboyant attire stand in ironic juxtaposition to the beautiful clothing of Mme. Arnoux which is being handled by strangers and sold for a pittance. An interesting parallel can be found in Madame Bovary, when Emma leaves for the theatre at Rouen with Charles, also wearing 'une robe de soie bleue à quatre falbalas.' There is also dramatic irony in Homais' comment as he admires her:

> 'Je vous trouve jolie comme un Amour!
> Vous allez faire florès à Rouen.' (MB 260)

She did indeed.

In general, Rosanette's rich yet slightly vulgar taste appears in direct contrast to Mme. Arnaux's quiet elegance.

A point of particular interest is the portrait of Rosanette which Pellerin the artist plans. He conceives various ideas about it, each successively more extravagant and exotic than the previous one:

> "Si je lui mettais, ... une robe de soie rose, ..si je l'habillais de velours bleu, sur un fond gris, ... une collerette de guipure blanche, avec un éventail noir et un rideau d'écarlate par derrière?" (171)

He then has other ideas:

> Elle aurait une robe de velours ponceau avec une ceinture d'orfèvrerie, et sa large manche doublée d'hermine laisserait voir son bras nu.... On apercevrait en dessous, .. des massifs d'orangers presque noirs où se découperait un ciel bleu, rayé de nuages blancs... Il y aurait, dans un plat d'argent... un chapelet d'ambre... un coffret de vieil ivoire un peu jaune dégorgeant des sequins d'or, .. (171)

In the midst of this fantastic conglomeration of rich accessories, colours and textures, there is no mention whatever of Rosanette's face, though Pellerin is supposedly painting her portrait!

A third type of woman is Mme. Dambreuse, a woman of high society who appears to Frédéric dignified but distant at the outset. When he visits her home, the details he notes are an indirect way of indicating his attitude towards her. He finds her severe but attractive:

> La peau mate de son visage paraissait tendue, et d'une fraicheur sans éclat, comme celle d'un fruit conservé. Mais ses cheveux...étaient plus fins que de la soie, ses yeux d'un azur brillant, ... elle caressait les floches rouges d'un écran japonais, .. Elle portait une robe de moire grise .... comme une puritaine. (150-1)

Her dull skin, fine, silky hair and elegant but staid style of dress combine to create the impression of a lady of high-standing.

On a further visit, Frédéric makes out, in the dim light, some gentlemen in dark suits and, in contrast, some ladies in summer evening dresses and Mme. Dambreuse herself:

> Sa robe de taffetas lilas avait des manches à crevés, d'où s'échappaient des bouillons de mousseline, le ton doux de l'étoffe se mariant à la nuance de ses cheveux; ... elle se tenait comme ... une fleur de haute culture. (259)

The lightness and femininity of her attire in contrast to the severity of her appearance on previous occasions perhaps reflects Frédéric's increasing awareness of her seductive qualities - though as he says,

> il lui trouvait quelque chose à la fois de langoureux et de sec, qui empêchait de la définir par une formule. (264)

This dry quality was mentioned previously in 'la peau mate...d'un fruit conservé'. (150)

Louise Roque is again a completely different type, simple and naïve, in contrast with the sophistication of Parisian women. When Frédéric returns home for the holidays, he catches sight of Louise on the other side of the hedge. She was then only twelve years old:

> Une petite fille...qui avait les cheveux rouges...Elle s'était fait des boucles d'oreilles avec des baies de sorbier; son corset de toile grise laissait à découvert ses épaules, un peu dorées par le soleil; des taches de confitures maculaient son jupon blanc. (109)

Young and innocent though she is, she tries, unsuccessfully, to be coquettish, as seen again in a later description. Here, her attempts to appear ladylike are shown in the 'boucles d'oreilles' which she had made for herself out of berries. When Frédéric returns after some time to

Nogent, he and Louise walk in M. Roque's garden. She has grown up considerably since the previous meeting:

> Elle avait dans ses cheveux rouges, à son chignon, une aiguille terminée par une boule de verre imitant l'émeraude; et elle portait, malgré son deuil (tant son mauvais goût était naïf), des pantoufles en paille garnies de satin rose, ... (273)

After the description of the well-dressed ladies of the city, this simple girl, brought up in the country, appears all the more naïve by the description of her incongruous clothes - cheap and vulgar but trying vainly to appear elegant: the imitation emerald glass ball on her hairpin and her raffia slippers decorated with pink satin. Flaubert himself even comments on her bad taste - a rare phenomenon in his writing for he normally lets the reader see what is going on through the eyes of the characters, and implies an attitude rather than states it. It seems on this occasion that her taste was so pathetically bad that he could not refrain from remarking on it.

(i) b) Texture and colour related to men's clothing

Since details of men's clothing are not described as frequently as ladies', it is not possible to follow the scenes where a certain character appears and examine a recurrent motif, as was done in the previous section. In most instances, we find only a single passage introducing a particular male character through a description of his outer appearance. Instead, a grouping can be made according to class or social standing: the sophisticated and more leisured, the professional or literary and the working people.

The first character in L'Éducation sentimentale to be introduced in terms of his clothing and appearance is M. Arnoux, as already mentioned.[1] His self-confidence and eccentricity are implied from his extravagant outfit. Flaubert took extreme care to study the fashions of each epoch and we may presume that Arnoux was dressed in the height of fashion. Through the visual image created by a sort of cinema technique, as we know it today, we can draw conclusions about the wearer's character.[2]

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1. See comparison of method of introducing characters in Flaubert and Balzac, supra pp. 67-72.

2. For further references to Flaubert's style and the technique of the cinema, see infra p.101 , note 2.

Frédéric's clothes are not described until he has the opportunity to buy new ones. In a succinct paragraph describing Mme. Moreau's disappointment about Frédéric's failure in his examinations, the money she sends is spent on clothes:

> ... il reçut l'argent du trimestre avec la somme destinée aux répétitions, et qui servit à payer un pantalon gris perle, un chapeau de feutre blanc et une badine à pomme d'or. (81)

His choice of clothing shows perhaps excessively good taste for a young student of his standing - as if each item had been chosen to produce a deliberate effect.

Little is said of M. Dambreuse's appearance until the description of the death-scene where, it is interesting to observe, there is mention of his general appearance and clothing but no details of his facial expression:

> Son visage était jaune comme de la paille;... il avait un foulard autour du crâne, un gilet de tricot, et un crucifix d'argent sur la poitrine, (405)

One is again reminded of the cinema technique - first a general impression of the death-chamber and the attendants, followed by the close-up.

In Madame Bovary, certain characteristic details of Léon's and Rodolphe's clothing can be observed at turning-points in the story. As Léon accompanies Emma to see the wet-nurse:

> ...son regard qu'elle promenait devant elle rencontra l'épaule du jeune homme, dont la redingote avait un collet de velours noir. (MB 112)

Velvet was obviously a material Emma associated with sophistication and in the days when she was first in love with Léon, it even stood as a symbol of the luxury denied her:

> Elle s'irritait d'un plat mal servi ou d'une porte entre-bâillée, gémissait du velours qu'elle n'avait pas, du bonheur qui lui manquait, de ses rêves trop hauts, de sa maison trop étroite. (MB 129)

The sensuous qualities in rich materials were something to which Flaubert himself was strongly attracted, as we have seen, for instance, in his repeated references to 'soie'.[1]

This touch of elegance impresses and attracts Emma, as does Rodolphe's more casual and unconventional attire when they meet at the fair and he first declares his love for her:

> ... sa chemise de batiste à manchettes plissées bouffant au hasard du vent, dans l'ouverture de son gilet, qui était de coutil gris, et son pantalon à larges raies découvrait aux chevilles ses bottines de nankin, claquées de cuir verni. (MB 163)

Texture helps to convey the image of a man who thinks a lot about his appearance and the figure he cuts in the

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1. For further references, see supra pp.75-6 note 1

eyes of admiring women. His polished boots remind us of other descriptions of gentlemen's footwear: Charles' bovine nature is exemplified by his boots:

> Il portait toujours de fortes bottes, qui avaient au cou-de-pied deux plis épais obliquant vers les chevilles, tandis que le reste de l'empeigne se continuait en ligne droite, tendu comme par un pied de bois. (MB 49-50)

The corrupt notary who Emma mistakenly imagines may help her in her plight, after she has left

> ...resta fort stupéfait, les yeux fixés sur ses belles pantoufles en tapisserie. C'était un présent de l'amour. (MB 358)

Emma has refused to yield to his advances, which shakes his morale. Mention of these slippers conveys something of the life he led: he would help women in legal or financial matters and expected automatically to receive their favours in exchange.

If we look at Flaubert's presentation of members of the professional or literary circles, we find, in L'Éducation sentimentale, descriptions of characters in the artistic world. At Arnoux's boutique, where artists and critics are seen discussing together, Regimbart is described by means of some details of his clothing:

> ....il s'essuyait le front avec son mouchoir...qu'il portait sur sa poitrine, entre deux boutons de sa redingote verte. Il avait un pantalon à plis, des souliers-bottes, une cravate longue; .., et son chapeau à bords retroussés le faisait reconnaître, de loin, dans les foules. (56)

The character of this bohemian, who has little regard for what people think of him, is indicated by his eccentric but simple attire. Later, Martinon is introduced:

> Il portait ordinairement une grosse redingote couleur mastic avec des claques en caoutchouc; mais il apparut un soir dans une toilette de marié: gilet de velours à châle, cravate blanche, chaîne d'or. (75)

He also dresses normally in a bohemian fashion but on this particular occasion he had been doing business with M. Dambreuse and had adorned himself in the appropriate velvet waistcoat, white tie and gold chain.

M. Homais, the chemist in Madame Bovary, is introduced as:

> Un homme en pantoufles de peau verte, quelque peu marqué de petite vérole et coiffé d'un bonnet de velours à gland d'or, (MB 88)

As we are told, 'Sa figure n'exprimait rien que la satisfaction de soi-même', and it is he, the mundane man, who ultimately succeeds in life, receiving the 'croix d'honneur'. This first impression of his appearance with details of his expensive and good-quality slippers and cap, though he is of simple family and modest means, is characteristic of a man who wishes to advertise himself.

Charles, before qualifying as a doctor, is described as a young boy at school. What is of particular interest is his cap - symbolic as it were of the pitiful figure he is to cut through most of his adult life:

> C'était une de ces coiffures d'ordre composite, où l'on retrouve les éléments du bonnet à poil, du chapska, du chapeau rond,de la casquette de loutre et du bonnet de coton, une de ces pauvres choses, ... dont la laideur muette a des profondeurs d'expression comme le visage d'un imbécile. (MB 4)

Flaubert's view of the poorer, working-class people can be assumed from his descriptions of the passengers - workers and small-shop-owners - on board the 'Ville-de-Montereau'. The drab display of worn, cheap, soiled materials and dingy colours contrasts strongly with the elegance of Mme. Arnoux. They appear wearing:

> ... de vieilles calottes grecques ou des bhapeaux déteints, de maigres habits noirs, ... quelque gilet à châle laissait voir une chemise de calicot, maculée de café; des épingles de chrysocale...; des sous-pieds cousus retenaient des chaussons de lisière; ... (22)

In the description of the street brawl during which Dussardier is taken off to the police-station, Flaubert picks out a salient detail to serve as a characterisation of this simple, working-class man:

> ... la chevelure telle qu'un paquet d'étoupes, debordait sous une casquette en toile cirée. (47)

Later, this headstrong, burly man who had made his pipe so lovingly and painstakingly into a work of art, is seen stricken with sadness when he finds it broken in his pocket:

> Il se palpa, puis retira du fond de sa poche les débris d'une pipe - une belle pipe en écume de mer, avec un tuyau en bois noir, un couvercle d'argent et un bout d'ambre.

> Depuis trois ans, il travaillait à en faire un chef d'oeuvre ..... il contemplait ces ruines de sa joie avec un regard d'une ineffable tristesse. (49)

The details of the fine quality of the materials used in the making of this precious pipe reveal an unexpected refinement in this outwardly tough-looking working-man. His grief is all the more pathetic through the contrast of these two aspects of his nature.

In Madame Bovary, a sort of 'negative' characterisation - an indication of the peasant's instinct to conform and follow the traditional pattern of life - is achieved by the presentation of the villagers' turn-out at the fair with their monotonous uniformity:

> Tous ces gens-là se ressemblaient.... Tous les gilets étaient de velours à châle, toutes les montres portaient au bout d'un long ruban quelque cachet ovale en cornaline, et l'on appuyait ses deux mains sur ses deux cuisses, en écartant avec soin la fourche du pantalon, dont le drap non décati reluisait plus brillamment que le cuir des fortes bottes. (MB 166)

Again we note the attention to footwear, and the whole description is entirely in keeping with simple country people carefully turned out in their 'Sunday best'.

(i) c) Texture and colour in relation to interiors and group scenes

Interiors, whether in sumptuously furnished Parisian apartments, elegant country residences or more modest abodes and meeting-places - these are a feature which obviously interested Flaubert exceedingly. As clothing with its variety of textures, materials and colours is a means of characterisation, so the way in which interiors are furnished also closely reflects the life and personality of their inhabitants. We know from information about Flaubert's own life that though he enjoyed visiting the wealthy Parisian homes, he remained an outsider and quickly returned to take refuge in the peace of Croisset. The sophistication and opulence which no doubt impressed him similarly impress Frédéric and it is through Frédéric's eyes that most of these residences are portrayed. The scene is set before us when he pays his first visit to M. Dambreuse:

> Il...entra dans un vestibule pavé en marbre de couleur...
>
> Un double escalier droit, avec un tapis rouge à baguettes de cuivre, un bananier dont les feuilles larges retombaient sur le velours..... Deux candélabres de bronze tenaient des globes de porcelaine.... (37)

The wealth of the home is especially apparent in the heavy textures and materials of the furnishings - the marble, copper, bronze, porcelain and velvet. The taste and social standing of the owners and also Frédéric's

preoccupation with rich appearances are indicated.

On a later visit, he passes through two rooms before reaching the large lounge which is furnished in an imposing style:

> .....un grand salon à hautes fenêtres, et dont la cheminée monumentale supportait une pendule en forme de sphère, avec deux vases de porcelaine monstrueux où se hérissaient, comme deux buissons d'or, deux faisceaux de bobèches....les lourdes portières en tapisserie tombaient majestueusement; .....Frédéric souriait de plaisir, malgré lui. (149-50)

Frédéric's involuntary reaction to the monumental splendour in which he finds himself shows how the richness of objects and textures appeals to him and flatters his 'ego'. He feels a sense of glory at having made his way into such a milieu.

The next room, where Mme. Dambreuse receives him, is, in contrast, lighter and more daintily furnished:

> ...un appartement ovale, lambrissé de bois de rose, bourré de meubles mignons....(150)

The atmosphere is more intimate. Frédéric pays Mme. Dambreuse repeated visits and never ceases to be impressed by the opulence he sees:

> ...enfin, il arrivait dans son boudoir, discret comme un tombeau, tiède comme une alcôve...chiffonnières, écrans, coupes et plateaux en laque, en écaille, en ivoire, en malachite, ... on était même saisi par la noblesse de l'ensemble, ce qui tenait peut-être....à l'opulence des portières et aux...crépines de soie, flottant sur les bâtons dorés des tabourets. (392)

The assortment of textures of the precious ornaments and the details of gilded furnishings and silk trimmings[1] contribute to the air of aristocratic life which Frédéric finds so delectable.

The Arnoux household is another which he often frequents. When he comes upon Arnoux's art shop, the rich textures, materials and colours catch his eye:

> ...deux bahuts chargés de porcelaines, de bronzes, ... et un lustre en saxe, un tapis vert...avec une table en marqueterie, donnaient... plutôt l'apparence d'un salon que d'une boutique. (38)

He later visits the Arnoux home. As they proceed to the dining-room, everything he sees delights him:

> La salle, telle qu'un parloir moyen âge, était tendue de cuir battu... et autour de la table, les verres de Bohême, diversement colorés, faissaient au milieu des fleurs et des fruits comme une illumination, dans un jardin. (64)

The richness of the table is intensified by the colours of the glasses, flowers and fruit, and once the scene has been set, Flaubert proceeds to describe in elaborate detail the wealth and abundance of the dishes. These feasts are a recurrent motif.[2] With a little stretch of

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1. For further references to 'soie' see supra pp. 75-6 note (1).

2. For further descriptions of feasts see:

   Rosanette's party (144/146)
   Madame Dambreuse's parties (179/369)
   Cisy's party (241)
   The ball at la Vaubyessard (MB 57-59)
   The feast in Hérodias (TC 120/124)
   The feast in Salammbô (S 3-4)
   The feast in La Tentation de St. Antoine (TSA 25)

the imagination, one might say that he almost evokes the sense of taste.

After Frédéric receives the news about his inheritance, his first thought is of how he will be able to see Mme. Arnoux again. The scene comes to his mind's eye, complete with full details of colour and rich fabrics:

> ...il s'aperçut auprès d'elle, chez elle, lui apportant quelque cadeau dans un papier de soie, tandis qu'à la porte stationnerait... un coupé noir, avec un domestique en livrée brune...(117)

In his home:

> ...la salle à manger serait en cuir rouge, le boudoir de soie jaune...(117)

Frédéric's intense preoccupation with rich textures and colours shows us something of his love of luxury and how environment comes to influence his feelings for a particular person. This is seen clearly when he later finds Mme. Arnoux in humble surroundings. A purely domestic scene meets his eye:

> Les rideaux, comme les meubles étaient en damas de laine marron; deux oreillers se touchaient contre le traversin, une bouillotte chauffait dans les charbons; et l'abat-jour de la lampe.... assombrissait l'appartement. Mme. Arnoux avait une robe de chambre en mérinos gros bleu. (129)

A sense of warmth is conveyed by the coal fire and the woollen material of the furnishings and Mme. Arnoux's housecoat, but there is something sombre about the dimly-lit scene and Frédéric is disappointed at not feeling

the joy he had so confidently expected - the glamour has gone. Flaubert inserts a comment at this point:

> Frédéric s'était attendu à des spasmes de joie; - mais les passions s'étiolent quand on les dépayse, et, ne retrouvant plus Mme. Arnoux dans le milieu où il l'avait connue, elle lui semblait avoir perdu quelque chose, ... enfin n'être pas la même. (129)

Flaubert here has touched on the vast subject of identity and the conditioning of emotions and relationships through environment - in fact, the whole question of the subjective nature of experience and the transitoriness of human emotion.[1] This is something we shall deal with more fully later in the analysis, and in the discussion of James Joyce's and particularly Virginia Woolf's work.

The castle of Fontainebleau presents yet another style of interior. Frédéric and Rosanette, during the political upheavals in Paris, decide to visit Fontainebleau where the majestic splendour of the ornate architecture and decoration impresses them deeply:

> Ils furent éblouis par la splendeur du plafond, divisé en compartiments octogones, rehaussé d'or et d'argent, plus ciselé qu'un bijou et par l'abondance des peintures qui couvrent les murailles..... Les dix fenêtres en arcades étaient grandes ouvertes..... et du fond des bois...il semblait venir un écho des hallalis poussés dans les trompes d'ivoire, ... (348)

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1. For further discussion see Introduction pp.15-20

The wealth of the castle is emphasised by these details of texture and the whole description comes as a kind of light relief after life in the centre of Paris.

Rosanette then tells Frédéric the story of her life and of how her mother made an agreement with 'un homme gras, la figure couleur de buis' to introduce her to the life of the brothels. What struck this poor girl as she was taken off for her initiation was:

> un candélabre de vermeil...Une glace au plafond...et les teintures des murailles en soie bleu... (356)

The plush elegance naturally impressed her, since she came from a humble home.

After considerable time has passed, Rosanette gives birth to Frédéric's son and he visits Rosanette at the 'Maison de santé' run by Mme. Alessandri. He is taken into the lounge:

> Une femme de chambre...l'introduisit dans le salon, orné d'une table en acajou, de fauteuils en velours grenat...(413)

From these few details we may imagine the establishment to be simple but of quite good standing.

Taking an overall view of the interiors associated with Mme. Arnoux and Rosanette respectively, we may observe that in the descriptions of Mme. Arnoux's residences there is a certain continuity, reflecting her status in society, whereas Rosanette, a girl of simple origins whose fate it was to trade on her attractive

looks, appears in a variety of surroundings which have been determined by the 'patron' of the moment and which pin-point certain episodes in her life. Whether we see her in the first brothel she is introduced to, in the luxury of her various apartments, or in the 'Maison de santé' where her son is born, her environment is characterised by telling details of texture and colour. The rapid changes from one environment to another indicate the haphazard orientation of her life, consistent with the opportunist that she is.

Group scenes describe both interiors and the kind of people gathered there: it is impossible to dissociate one from the other, the total effect being created by details of texture, colour and materials. Some characterisation of individuals emerges, but in general, the characters in their surroundings create atmosphere and it is this which is significant.

The first of these scenes to be presented is Rosanette's fancy-dress party. The costumes, the rooms and the exotic decorations are a mass of assorted brilliant colours and textures. Frédéric is overwhelmed by his first impression: once again, rich materials are predominant:

> ...il n'aperçut que de la soie, du velours, des épaules nues, une masse de couleurs qui se balançait aux sons d'un orchestre caché par des verdures, entre des murailles tendues de soie jaune, avec des portraits au pastel, çà et là, et des torchères de cristal...(135)

The yellow silk is reminiscent, in a peculiarly coincidental way, of the 'boudoir en soie jaune' which Frédéric dreams of for himself.[1] The whole scene, as it first meets Frédéric's eyes, is reminiscent of an Impressionist painting - soft colours, textures and lights, and shapes without individual faces. As mentioned previously, the technique of our modern cinema camera is also apparent: a complete scene is set which, by means of close-ups, will break up into details as the description progresses.[2]

There follow analytical descriptions of the costumes of the various guests:

> Un vieux beau, vêtu... d'une longue simarre de soie pourpre, dansait avec Mme. Rosanette, qui portait un habit vert, une culotte de tricot et des bottes molles à éperons d'or...une grande blonde...s'était mise en femme sauvage; et, par-dessus son maillot de couleur brune, n'avait qu'un pagne de cuir, des bracelets de verroterie, et un diadème de clinquant, d'où s'élevait une haute gerbe en plumes de paon...une Bacchante, couronnée de raisins, une peau de léopard sur le flanc gauche et des cothurnes à rubans d'or... une Polonaise, en spencer de velours nacarat, balançait son jupon de gaze sur ses bas de soie gris perle, pris dans des

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1. Cf. Frédéric's plans, once he has inherited his uncle's fortune. See supra p. 97

2. Cf. P. Danger, Sensations et objets dans le Roman de Flaubert, Librairie Armand Colin, Paris, 1973, Chap.VI, 'Flaubert et le Langage cinématographique', pp.186-258.

> L'oeuvre de Flaubert est en effet exactement conçue comme une oeuvre cinématographique, c'est à dire que tout y est exprimé par l'image, le son et la perception du mouvement, sans qu'aucune analyse psychologique, aucun commentaire de l'auteur ne vienne jamais se superposer à la simple vision de la scène décrite... (p. 186)

See also Introduction supra pp. 39-40 for further discussion of this aspect.

bottines roses cerclées de fourrure blanche...Mlle. Loulou, ... portait une large collerette de dentelle sur sa veste de velours uni; et son large pantalon de soie ponceau...serré à la taille par une écharpe de cachemire, avait, ... des petits camélias blancs naturels. (136)

These descriptions of fantastic costume and clothing, where we see none of the faces, create a visual impression of extravagance which tells us indirectly a good deal about the pleasure-loving, slightly depraved, slightly bohemian character of the wearers. Nothing has been spared in the creation of these outfits - materials range from leopard skin and peacock feathers to lace, furs, velvets and silks.

Frédéric enters the boudoir:

> ...capitonné de soie bleu pâle... tandis qu'au plafond, dans un cercle de bois doré, des Amours émergeant d'un ciel d'azur, batifolaient sur des nuages en forme d'édredon. (137)

The association of the clouds with an eiderdown, i.e. likening something in nature to a household object, or to something with sophisticated connotations, is an interesting feature of Flaubert's style.[1] Another striking

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1. For further examples of this feature, see particularly:

ES : pp. 19, 73, 84, 107, 231, 275, 353, 354, 415, 416.

MB : pp. 39, 83.

example comes to mind from Madame Bovary, in the description of the countryside on the way to Yonville-L'Abbaye, where the fields take on the texture of a coat with green velvet collar and silver trimmings:

> L'eau qui court au bord de l'herbe sépare d'une raie blanche la couleur des prés et celle des sillons et la campagne ainsi ressemble à un grand manteau déplié qui a un collet de velours vert, bordé d'un galon d'argent. (MB 83)

To return to Frédéric at Rosanette's home - he continues to be dazzled by the elegance before him:

> ...une manière de tente tapissée de soie rose, avec de la mousseline blanche par-dessus. Des meubles noirs à marqueterie de cuivre garnissaient la chambre à coucher, où se dressait, sur une estrade couverte d'une peau de cygne, le grand lit à baldequin et à plumes d'autruche...(137)

Throughout L'Éducation sentimentale we are constantly presented with descriptions of interiors, e.g. the Arnoux home, the Dambreuse home, Rosanette's home, each rich in details of colours and textures and serving a double purpose: they are indirect characterisations of the owners of these homes and also of Frédéric, who shows himself so easily impressed by physical appearances indicating wealth and sophisticated elegance.

As the evening continues at Rosanette's home, other characters are introduced:

> ... un petit vieillard replet, en habit marron, à boutons d'or. Malgré ses joues flétries qui tombaient sur sa haute cravate blanche, ses cheveux blonds, et frisés naturellement comme les poils d'un caniche, lui donnaient quelque chose de folâtre. (140)

This was M. Oudry. Mlle Vatnaz appears:

> Elle avait... une espèce de paletot en cachemire noir tombant sur un jupon clair, lamé d'argent... (141)

Once again, people are described without our being able to visualise any of the features of their faces. Through her striking outfits, Mlle. Vatnaz always gives the impression of extravagant eccentricity, as we see on later occasions.

At the Dambreuse home, on a later visit, like a ciné-camera slowly sweeping the scene, the writer fixes a general impression with selective touches of colour:

> La foule des hommes qui..... faisait de loin une seule masse noire, où les rubans des boutonnières mettaient des points rouges, çà et là, et que rendait plus sombre la monotone blancheur des cravates. (178)

The image is vivid, with the dots of colour emphasising the dark suits and the uniform whiteness of the ties. Types rather than individuals are described:

> ... et les visages, ou empourprés ou très blêmes, laissaient voir dans leur flétrissure la trace d'immenses fatigues, (178)

Flaubert's description of the ladies on this occasion provides another example of contrasts in texture and colour:

> Le ton mat de leurs gants faisait ressortir la blancheur humaine de leurs bras; (181)

The description of the spectators at the horse-races is reminiscent of these ball scenes and social gatherings (178-181), where the ladies' attire with its brilliant colours contrasts sharply with the sombre wear of the gentlemen:

> ...c'était l'époque des sous-pieds, des collets de velours et des gants blancs. Les femmes, vêtues de couleurs brillantes, portaient des robes à taille longue... elles faisaient comme de grands massifs de fleurs, tachetés de noir, çà et là, par les sombres costumes des hommes. (226)

It is interesting to note that the only allusion to the jockey's outfits is that they were dressed 'en casaque de soie' (226) - again we note the obsessive interest in silk.[1] Once the excitement of the races is

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1. For further reference see supra pp.75-6 note (1)

over and the carriages move by after the rain:

> ...le bleu du ciel, au-dessus, reparaissant à de certaines places, avait des douceurs de satin. (231)

The blue of the sky is associated in Flaubert's mind with the soft texture of satin. Once again, we see the likening of natural phenomena to something with sophisticated associations.[1]

Not associated with any society event is the scene described when Frédéric enters the examination room. This too is characterised by the furnishings and the examiners' apparel:

> Au milieu, des chaises de cuir entouraient une table, décorée d'un tapis vert. Elle séparait les candidats de MM. les examinateurs en robe rouge, tous portant des chaussses d'hermine sur l'épaule, avec des toques à galons d'or sur le chef. (79)

It is characteristic of Flaubert that we do not see the faces of the candidates or the examiners, but the austerity and dignity of the occasion, associated with old tradition, is evoked by the details of colour and texture.

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1. For further examples see supra p.102 note (1).

(ii) Texture and movement

In most cases we shall see, as in the section on Texture and Colour, that these sense-impressions are connected with clothing and the interiors of homes. The sensuous effect of movement adds to the visual image created, often has erotic connotations and in certain cases adds another dimension - a sense of the infinite.

A few unrelated examples can be given first before we examine those situations where the observer's vision is coloured by his emotional state - texture and movement thus gaining added significance. It is interesting to note that the motif of wind blowing on articles of clothing or materials occurs in almost all the passages below. Maybe Flaubert himself was attracted by different kinds of movement in cloth of different texture, caused by the wind - whether it was the light flutter of ribbons and dainty materials or the flapping of a velvet hood or damask curtains. Both the quality of the material and the characteristic way in which it moves are accentuated.

One example can be cited where Frédéric begins to write a novel with himself as the hero and Mme. Arnoux as the heroine:

> il... chantait sous son balcon, où palpitaient à la brise les rideaux en damas rouge du boulevard Montmartre. (42)

Allusion to movement here emphasises the heavy quality of the rich material.

At the races, Rosanette's attractive attire is described similarly in terms of texture and movement:

> Son chapeau de paille nacrée avait une garniture de dentelle noire. Le capuchon de son bournous flottait au vent; et elle s'abritait du soleil sous une ombrelle de satin lilas, pointue par le haut comme une pagode. (225)

The elegant extravagance of her apparel is emphasised by the movement of the hood in the wind.

One example of a rather different type, in which movement is not connected with the wind, can be seen when Mme. Arnoux's property is put up for auction. The textures and materials of all these articles have intimate associations for Frédéric and the picture in his mind's eye of how Mme. Arnoux's feet had moved so lightly over the carpet, for example, adds poignancy to the scene:

> Ainsi disparurent, les uns après les autres, le grand tapis bleu semé de camélias que ses pieds mignons frôlaient en venant vers lui, la petite bergère de tapisserie où il s'asseyait toujours en face d'elle,... les deux écrans de la cheminée, dont l'ivoire était rendu plus doux par le contact de ses mains; une pelote de velours, encore hérissée d'épingles. (441-2)

More interesting examples can be noted in a series of passages in connection with Mme. Arnoux. When Frédéric sets eyes on her for the first time on board ship:

> Elle avait un large chapeau de paille, avec des rubans roses, qui palpitaient au vent, derrière elle. (23)

The sensuous effect of movement adds to the picture of femininity and the light quality of the straw hat with its pink ribbons. When Frédéric takes leave of Mme. Arnoux and travels towards home, he remembers certain details of her clothing:

> .... sous le dernier volant de sa robe, son pied passait dans une mince bottine en soie, de couleur marron; la tente de coutil formait un large dais sur sa tête, et les petits glands rouges de la bordure tremblaient à la brise, perpétuellement. (27)

The daintiness of her exquisite footwear is imprinted on the mind as are the 'glands rouges' and the sensuous quality of their constant movement in the breeze. There are also erotic overtones in Frédéric's - or we may say Flaubert's - preoccupation with footwear,[1] intensified in this instance by the use of 'perpétuellement' following so closely.

These scenes with Mme. Arnoux are presented to us through Frédéric's heightened perceptiveness; his infatuated state colours his vision to such a degree that even the slightest movement assumes significance. A

c. Similar scene comes to mind from Madame Bovary, where the wind playing with the downy hair on the nape of Emma's

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1. For other references to footwear in general, see supra, pp. 78-9.

neck and the apron-strings on her hips has erotic connotations for the onlooker - Charles:

> On s'était dit adieu, on ne parlait plus; le grand air l'entourait, levant pêle-mêle les petits cheveux follets de sa nuque, ou secouant sur sa hanche les cordons de son tablier, qui se tortillaient comme des banderoles. (MB 20)

Phlegmatic by nature, Charles is hardly capable of infatuation, but he is strongly attracted by Emma at this stage. This is implied indirectly through the sensuous effects of the movement of the wind in her hair and her apron-strings flying out like streamers.

(iii) Texture and light

In most instances when we find light associated with texture, the predominant sense-impression is that of light rather than texture. Interiors are described flooded with light, illuminating the texture of various objects. However, there are some instances of texture predominating over light, as at Mme. Dambreuse's home:

> ....et les blanches scintillations des diamants, ... les taches lumineuses des pierreries étalées sur les poitrines, et l'éclat doux des perles accompagnant les visages se mêlaient au miroitement des anneaux d'or, aux dentelles, à la poudre, aux plumes, au vermillon des petites bouches, à la nacre des dents. (181)

The different ways in which the various precious stones catch the light, glitter and shine, combined with the different textures of lace, powder, feathers and so on, and the colours - gold, red and creamy white, build up an impression of brilliance and opulence. A good deal later, at the exotic feast given by Mme. Dambreuse, luscious dishes are described in detail, set on the table with silver and flowers:

> ...les stores de soie blanche, abaissés devant les fenêtres, emplissaient l'appartement d'une lumière douce. (369)

The soft light falling on the scene adds to the sensuous quality of the delicacies.

A further example can be quoted: when the carriages leave after the races:

> Alors passa devant eux, avec des miroitements de cuivre et d'acier, un splendide landau attelé de quatre chevaux, conduits....par deux jockeys en veste de velours, à crépines d'or. (230)

The shining horse-brasses and the velvet and gold of the jockeys' outfits enrich the image of the Dambreuses' well-appointed carriage.

A very different type of scene is described when Cisy and Frédéric prepare to have a duel. The box with the foils is opened:

> Elle contenait, sur un capitonnage de basane rouge, quatre epées charmantes, creuses au milieu, avec des poignées garnies de filigrane. Un rayon lumineux... tomba dessus; et elles parurent à Cisy briller comme des vipères d'argent sur une mare de sang. (252)

The morbid image evoked by the light falling on the foils, coupled with the red lining of their case, reminiscent of blood, serves as an indirect characterisation of Cisy who is an amazingly cowardly young man.

(iv) Texture and Smell

The combination of these sense-impressions can be noted in several passages describing Rosanette's apartments. In her dressing-room, the mass of feminine toiletries and perfumes emanating from the region of the bath carry exotic, sensuous associations for Frédéric:

> On voyait, tout de suite, que c'était l'endroit de la maison le plus hanté, et comme son vrai centre moral...sur une table de marbre blanc s'espaçaient deux larges cuvettes en faïences bleue; des planches de cristal formant étagères au-dessus étaient encombrées par des fioles, des brosses, des peignes....un drap pendait en dehors d'une baignoire, et des senteurs de pâtes d'amandes et de benjoin s'exhalaient.' (152)

Mâtho, on entering Salammbô's chamber, notices similar qualities in the costly materials and textures, added to which there are exquisite aromas. She has, presumably, just taken a bath. Mention of her fine slippers is a characteristic feature of Flaubert's:

> Une marche d'onyx entourait un bassin ovale; de fines pantoufles en peau de serpent étaient restées sur le bord avec une buire d'albâtre. La trace d'un pas humide s'apercevait au delà. Des senteurs exquises s'évaporaient. (S 88)

A heavy flower scent fills the 'boudoir' of Rosanette's new apartment:

> La cheminée,.. avait une étagère pyramidale, offrant...toute une collection de curiosités: de vieilles montres d'argent, des cornets de Bohême, des agrafes en pierreries, des boutons de jade, des émaux...; et tout cela se fondait, dans un crépuscule doré, avec la couleur bleuâtre du tapis, le reflet de nacre des tabourets, le ton fauve des murs couverts de cuir marron. Aux angles, sur des piédouches, des vases de bronze contenaient des touffes de fleurs qui alourdissaient l'atmosphère. (280-1)

The description of this amazing accumulation of costly ornaments and furnishings of varying materials, colours and textures culminates in the bronze vases with their 'touffes de fleurs' - again accentuating the impression of abundance in the thick tufts of flower-heads. The use of the term 'touffe' to convey the notion of abundance of growing things is reminiscent of the passage about the shrubs growing at la Vaubyessard:

> ... des bannettes d'arbustes, rhododendrons... bombaient leurs touffes de verdure inégales... (MB 55)

Also the thick bunches of reeds growing by the river banks at Nogent:

> Des touffes de roseaux et de joncs la bordent inégalement; ... (273) [1]

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1. For discussion of Flaubert's particular use of 'inégal' in these two passages, see section on 'inégalité', p. 206.

An example of characterisation through the effects of texture and scents occurs when Mlle. Vatnaz visits Frédéric in his apartment:

> Elle avait autour des poignets une bordure de dentelle et, sur le corsage de sa robe verte, des passementeries, comme un hussard. Son chapeau de tulle noir... lui cachait un peu le front;... une odeur de patchouli s'échappait de ses bandeaux;... (279)

The combined effect of the texture of fine materials and exotic perfume has erotic overtones and, ugly though Mlle. Vatnaz may be, she arouses violent desire in Frédéric.

In each case we observe a tendency in Flaubert to describe a particular interior or a lady's appearance with details of texture, then follow this up by the observation that the whole is pervaded with perfume.

The most skilfully contrived example of all is perhaps on the occasion of Frédéric's first visit to M. Dambreuse, when he notes a young lady leaving in her carriage:

> Il n'apercevait que son dos, couvert d'une mante violette. Cependant, il plongeait dans l'intérieur de la voiture, tendue de reps bleu, avec des passementeries et des effilés de soie. Les vêtements de la dame l'emplissaient; il s'échappait de cette petite boîte capitonnée un parfum d'iris, et comme une vague senteur d'élégances féminines. (37-8)

A wonderfully evocative fleeting image is created with the violet colour of the young lady's rich voluminous cloak filling the interior of the carriage and the textures of the blue rep and silk edging. The carriage from where the delicate scent is wafted is referred to as a 'boîte capitonnée' which immediately brings to mind feminine toiletries with boxes, bottles, powders and perfumes. The reference to 'vague senteur d'élégances féminines' is reminiscent of allusions to the perfumes worn by Mme. Dambreuse, a good deal further on in the work.[1] This indefinable perfume, epitomising all that is feminine and refined, completes the scene that catches Frédéric's eye.

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1. Cf. section on Smell, p.220.

LIGHT

Light, whether it is from the brilliant chandeliers hanging over richly laid feasts, complete with glittering silver and steaming dishes, or whether it is reflected on ladies' delicate skin or elaborate jewels and sequin-covered evening dresses; whether it is seen in twinkling stars or moonlight mirrored in glassy rivers, set against deep shadows; or whether it mingles with soft mists, is always an element which heightens a particular atmosphere and accentuates beauty. In the metaphorical sense, it is generally associated with warmth, inner contentment, optimism, or social brilliance. It is also frequently used to describe an infinity of love, joy or ambition.

The subject can be divided into the following sections:

1. Light and imagery
2. Light in its literal sense
   - (i) Light of various kinds
   - (ii) Light, shade, shadow and mist
   - (iii) Light, shade and movement
   - (iv) Light and texture

1. Light and imagery

We may first examine some passages where light is referred to in a metaphorical sense before moving on to the main part of the section where light appears in its literal meaning. The imagery Flaubert uses is, in fact, rather commonplace.

As in certain dream states we see everything bathed in light, so Frédéric after his first meeting with Mme. Arnoux sees her as the light of his life:

> L'univers venait tout à coup de s'élargir. Elle était le point lumineux où l'ensemble des choses convergeait;... il s'abandonnait à une joie rêveuse et infinie. (27)

His state is one of infinite joy. A sense of the boundless and even absolute can be seen again, later, when she happens to smile at him:

> ...il sentait ses regards pénétrer son âme, comme ces grands rayons de soleil qui descendent jusqu'au fond de l'eau. (103)

The reference to water carries connotations of depth and, perhaps, the infinite, for he goes on to say:

> 'Il l'aimait sans arrière-pensée, sans espoir de retour, absolument;' (103)

Frédéric returns to Paris full of joy in the expectation of seeing Mme. Arnoux once more:

> ...une pluie fine tombait, il faisait froid, le ciel était pâle, mais deux yeux qui valaient pour lui le soleil, resplendissaient derrière la brume. (123)

These two examples equate passion with the rays of the sun, Symbolically, when Mme. Arnoux returns to Frédéric after the lapse of so many years, the love that was once associated with sunlight is now seen in retrospect linked with moonlight, and in gentler, cooler, even nostalgic terms:

> 'Vous me faisiez l'effet d'un clair de lune par une nuit d'été, quand tout est parfums, ombres douces, blancheurs, infini;' (449)[1]

A synthesis of sense-impressions - perfume, shadows and whiteness combine to create an image which is both visual and abstract in its associations with the infinite - denoting eternal love.

Light as synonymous with illusions of happiness and success can be seen in Madame Bovary where Emma, in her dream-world, sees the vicomte as the light illuminating further dreams. He and his surroundings embody all the romance and social brilliance which do not exist in her own life:

> ...le cercle dont il était le centre peu à peu s'élargit autour de lui, et cette auréole qu'il avait, s'écartant de sa figure, s'étala plus au loin, pour illuminer d'autres rêves. (MB 68)

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1. For further references to use of 'infini', see infra, p.156 note (1).

Light, in her eyes, comes to be associated with social sophistication, wealth and the world of Paris:

> Le monde des ambassadeurs marchait sur des parquets luisants, dans des salons lambrissés de miroirs,... Dans les cabinets de restaurants où l'on soupe après minuit, riait, à la clarté des bougies, la foule bigarrée de gens de lettres et des actrices. (MB 69)

Frédéric also sees light associated with worldly advancement. Flaubert uses it figuratively when his hero is spurred to ambition by a desire to impress Mme. Arnoux with his performance in the law-courts:

> Ces images fulguraient, comme des phares, à l'horizon de sa vie. (105)

Once again, light is connected with an illusory state. Just as Emma dreams of a world which can never be hers, so Frédéric sees himself in positions which, due to his innate passivity, will never be his.

This strange association of light with day-dreams has a hallucinatory quality about it - the illusory world and the real world become inseparable.

John C. Lapp has examined this subject in detail in his article 'Art and Hallucination in Flaubert'.[1]

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1. Lapp, John C., 'Art and Hallucination in Flaubert', French Studies, October 1956, pp. 322-333.
For further discussion of this subject see Introduction, pp. 32-3

2. Light in its literal sense

(i) Light of various kinds

Let us now examine some aspects of light used in a literal sense. The first mention of light enhancing physical beauty and adding to its sensuous attraction occurs when Frédéric first notices Mme. Arnoux:

> Jamais il n'avait vu cette splendeur de sa peau brune, la séduction de sa taille, ni cette finesse des doigts que la lumière traversait. (23)

A comparable example of light accentuating the luminous quality of skin can be seen in a description of Rosanette:

> Les bougies du candélabre devant elle tremblaient au vent; cette lumière blanche pénétrait sa peau de tons nacrés, mettait du rose à ses paupières, faisait briller les globes de ses yeux; la rougeur du fruit se confondait avec le pourpre de ses lèvres,... (235)

and in one of the early descriptions of Emma in Madame Bovary:

> Le feu l'éclairait en entier, pénétrant d'une lumière crue la trame de sa robe, les pores égaux de sa peau blanche... Une grande couleur rouge passait sur elle; selon le souffle du vent qui venait par la porte entr'ouverte. (MB 95)

In these three passages we are made aware of the translucent quality of skin and the beauty of complexions through the observer's heightened perceptiveness. The observer - Frédéric in the first two instances and Léon in the last - is passionately attracted by the physical aspects of the feminine beauty before him, and this is transmitted through sensitivity to the effects of light, colour and the texture of skin. In the last two passages, there are definite erotic connotations in

the red colour, made more pronounced by the light shed on the women's faces.

Scenes where the bright light of chandeliers is shed on rich dining-tables are found in the descriptions of various parties given by Rosanette, Mme. Dambreuse, and by the Marquis d'Andervilliers in Madame Bovary.

At Rosanette's feast, the light emphasises the quality of the food laid out:

> Un lustre de cuivre à quarante bougies éclairait la salle, dont les murailles disparaissaient sous de vieilles faïences..; et cette lumière crue tombant d'aplomb, rendait plus blanc encore, parmi les hors d'oeuvre et les fruits, un gigantesque turbot.... (143-4)

The whiteness and the immense size of the turbot is brought into relief - it is a powerful visual image rather than an appeal to the appetite. The motif of light shed on a dining-table, illuminating the dishes and, often, flower decorations, fruit and silverware, is a favourite one of Flaubert's. It is repeated at the Dambreuses' party, where the central light illumines the flowers rising above the ladies' heads, creating a visual image of brilliant colour:

> Sous le lustre, au milieu, un pouf énorme supportait une jardinière, dont les fleurs....surplombaient la tête des femmes... (178)

and once again, when Frédéric and Mme. Dambreuse dine tête-à-tête:

> Elle souriait en face de lui, ... par-dessus des fleurs dans une corbeille, à la lumière de la lampe suspendue; et, comme la fenêtre était ouverte, on apercevait des étoiles. (398)

The romance of the scene is accentuated by the combination of the artificial light shed over the table and the natural light of the stars outside.

When Emma is invited to the ball at La Vaubyessard by the Marquis d'Andervilliers, she is overcome by the brilliance of the scene before her - the perfume of flowers, the aroma of delicious and exotic foods, and the table glittering with many kinds of reflected light complete this picture of opulence:

> Les bougies des candélabres allongeaient des flammes sur les cloches d'argent; les cristaux à facettes, couverts d'une buée mate, se renvoyaient des rayons pâles,... (MB 57)

A very different type of celebration - the dance at the 'Alhambra' - is illuminated by gas-lights and there is the gaudy attraction of the fireworks display:

> ... des soleils se mirent à tourner; la lueur des feux de Bengale, couleur d'émeraude, éclaira pendant une minute tout le jardin,... (93)

These cheap effects accentuate the vulgarity of the scene.

Light, from quite another aspect, contributes to Frédéric's feeling of calm and inner contentment. In this instance, it does not produce a visual image, as in these last examples, but helps to create a state of mind:

> Le calme de cette grande pièce,... la lumière qui tombait du plafond... le plongeait... dans une sorte de bien-être intellectuel. (73)[1]

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1. For further discussion of the particular use of 'bien-être intellectuel' in this context, see section on Sound, infra pp. 162-3.

2 (ii) Light, shade, shadow and mist

The effects of light and shade are some of the most skilful and expressive pieces of writing in L'Éducation sentimentale. There are many instances, too, in Madame Bovary. People, scenes and objects are given prominence through this contrast. It may be termed a kind of 'duality' by means of which descriptions take on an added significance. One might be reminded of Goethe's aphorism:

> Du dankest Gott,
> Wenn Er dich presst,
> Und dankest Ihn
> Wenn Er dich wieder entlässt.

Much of human experience becomes meaningful by virtue of this contrast or duality. In L'Éducation sentimentale, one of the most interesting characteristic devices is the contrast of silence with sound and movement with stillness. For instance, when M. and Mme. Arnoux quarrel:

> Alors il se fit un grand silence; et tout, dans l'appartement, sembla plus immobile. Un cercle lumineux, au-dessus de la carcel, blanchissait le plafond, tandis que, dans les coins, l'ombre s'étendait comme des gazes noires superposées; on entendait le tic-tac de la pendule avec la crépitation du feu. (189)

A multiplicity of effects is produced - the visual image created in the contrast of light and shadow and the two homely sounds made by the clock and the fire contrasted with a prevailing stillness.

Naturally light and shade are an element that predominates in painting and Flaubert certainly creates visual images by using this descriptive technique. As Frédéric returns home after seeing Mme. Arnoux for the first time, the scene around him of the luminous sunset, huge dark shadows together with the sound of a dog barking, combine to produce an atmosphere which fills him with inexplicable apprehension:

> Une large couleur de pourpre enflammait le ciel... De grosses meules de blé,... projetaient des ombres géantes. Un chien se mit à aboyer....Il frissonna, pris d'une inquiétude sans cause. (27)

At a later point in the work, another sunset is described, but on this occasion, Mme. Arnoux is herself present:

> Un côté de l'horizon commençait à pâlir, tandis que, de l'autre, une large couleur d'orange s'étalait dans le ciel et était plus empourprée au faîte des collines, devenues complètement noires. Mme. Arnoux se tenait assise... ayant cette lueur d'incendie derrière elle. (102)

This striking sunset-scene, with the sky a mixture of pale tones and a deep orange against which the hills stand out black, is reminiscent of a painting. The image of Mme. Arnoux, sitting silhouetted against this background, is full of romantic associations for Frédéric. An interesting parallel occurs in Madame Bovary where the same visual image is created, but in this instance, with metaphorical meaning:

> L'amour, peu à peu, s'éteignit par l'absence, ... et cette lueur d'incendie, qui empourprait son ciel pâle, se couvrit de plus d'ombre et s'effaça par degrés. (MB 147)

Léon has left and Emma's love for him gradually dwindles, like the colours of the sky fading at dusk. Flaubert obviously equates light and the brilliant colours of sunsets with erotic passion.

A variety of street scenes are described using the effects of light and shade. For instance, when Frédéric wanders aimlessly along the boulevards:

> Après de sombres ruelles exhalant des fraîcheurs humides, il arrivait sur de grandes places désertes, éblouissantes de lumière, et où les monuments dessinaient au bord du pavé des dentelures d'ombre noire. (84)

The metaphorical use of 'dentelures' reproduces with wonderful precision the shadows cast by the finely chiselled carvings of the monuments and is reminiscent of similar imagery in other passages.[1]

Later as he walks in utter depression through the streets at night, light throws some figures into relief:

> Quand un piéton s'avançait.... un rayon de lumière lui passait entre les jambes, décrivait.... un immense quart de cercle; et un homme surgissait dans l'ombre, avec sa botte et sa lanterne. (95)

A complete scene is created by the use of contrasting light and shade.

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1. For further examples of this feature, refer to supra, p. 102 note (1).

During the political riots, Frédéric is escorted through the streets:

> Le Jardin des Plantes... faisait une grande masse noire; tandis qu'à gauche, la façade entière de la Pitié, éclairée à toutes ses fenêtres, flambait comme un incendie, et des ombres passaient rapidement sur les carreaux. (361)

Light and dark masses of shadow create a clear visual image. Light burning in the windows is equated with fire. In contrast, the complete lack of light is emphasised in la rue Saint-Victor which he found:

> ....toute sombre, sans un bec de gaz ni une lumière aux maisons. (361)

The characteristic atmosphere in different types of homes and at friendly gatherings is also portrayed through effects of light, shadow and mist. Arnoux, Pellerin and other critics meet to discuss art topics. Frédéric is also present:

> L'appartement...était si rempli qu'on ne pouvait remuer; et la lumière des bougies roses passait dans la fumée des cigares comme des rayons de soleil dans la brume. (53-4)

In this example, it is not so much a matter of contrast as one of intermingling light and smoke, but the effect achieved is still one of accentuation, very similar to that found in painting. Did not Monet and Pissarro produce the effects of light and mist so wonderfully in their scenes of Paris and London? Chronologically,

certainly, Flaubert's work preceded theirs, but the soft outlines and misty atmospheres transfused with light are the same.[1]

When Frédéric and his friends meet to talk politics, a brilliant visual image of light and shade is created which also conveys the impression of heated discussion in the congenial atmosphere produced by alcohol and candlelight:

> Les flammes de l'alcool et celles des bougies échauffèrent vite l'appartement, et la lumière de la mansarde...éclairait...le tuyau d'une cheminée qui se dressait en noir sur la nuit. (289)

The elegant gatherings at Mme. Dambreuse's home are characterised by the discreet lighting and objects reflected in a mirror:

> La lumière était faible, malgré les lampes posées dans les coins; car les trois fenêtres...dressaient... trois larges carrés d'ombre noire.... Des jardinières....occupaient les intervalles de la muraille; et une théière d'argent avec un samovar se mirait au fond, dans une glace. (259)

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1. Cf. P. Danger, Sensations et objets dans le roman de Flaubert. Chapitre II, 'La Description de la Nature', deals extensively with parallels in Flaubert's descriptive style and that of painters. He refers particularly to the Impressionists:

> Sans être intimement lié, comme le sera Zola, à des peintres de son époque et sans s'intéresser particulièrement aux idées qu'ils défendent, Flaubert devance pourtant, en quelque sorte instinctivement, les premiers impressionnistes tant il est proche d'eux par sa conception de l'art et le regard qu'il pose sur les choses.
>
> p.86.

An unusual image is created by the three dark squares of the windows in contrast to the soft lighting and reflected silverware in the mirror. The shadows in the windows seem to accentuate and even symbolise the outer world, so dark and drab in comparison with the glamour within. Two parallel scenes come to mind - one from Madame Bovary and the other from 'The Dead' in Dubliners.

As the ball at la Vaubyessard goes on, Emma suddenly notices the peasants outside in the garden, looking in with their faces pressed against the window panes:

> ...Mme. Bovary tourna la tête et aperçut dans le jardin, contre les carreaux, des faces de paysans qui regardaient. (MB 61)

In 'The Dead', Gabriel, in the midst of the gaiety of the party, imagines people outside listening to the strains of music:

> People, perhaps, were standing in the snow on the quay outside, gazing up at the lighted windows and listening to the waltz music. (D 182)

In this last passage the windows are, in fact, lit up, but in all three examples light seems to be synonymous with the gay sophistication within, and the darkness of night through the windows with the simple, duller life outside.

2 (iii) Light, shade and movement

Flaubert's consciousness of irregularities of movement[1] appears frequently in connection with effects of light and shade. Different types of light move or are reflected in various ways. Steady beams of lamplight in dark streets, flickering light reflected in water, and the light of the moon and stars are recurring motifs, often carrying emotive connotations. A visual image is created through the contrast of light and shade to which is added the further dimension of a sensuous quality, through the effects of movement.

If we first take lamp-lit street scenes, there are a variety of examples where mist and fog add to a hazy atmosphere and reflect Frédéric's state of mind. As he wanders around miserably at night:

> Les réverbères se balançaient, en faisant trembler sur la boue de longs reflets jaunâtres. Des ombres glissaient au bord des trottoirs... la brume tombait, et il lui semblait que les ténèbres humides... descendaient indéfiniment dans son coeur. (41-2)

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1. For further references to irregularities of movement, see section on 'inégalité', pp. 209-210.

The shadows and mist here are equated with Frédéric's depressed state, which is intensified by the use of 'indéfiniment'. The fluctuating quality of the lamp-light in the wet atmosphere is further emphasised by phrases including verbs of motion such as:

> Les réverbères se balançaient

and

> en faisant trembler sur la boue de longs reflets jaunâtres.

A similar description of lamp-light is equated with happiness:

> Les réverbères brillaient en deux lignes droites, indéfiniment, et de longues flammes rouges vacillaient dans la profondeur de l'eau...le ciel, plus clair, semblait soutenu par les grandes masses d'ombre...Un brouillard lumineux flottait au delà, sur les toits;... (68)

The reflections in the Seine are equated with fire, while 'indéfiniment' has an emotive quality closely associated with Frédéric's infatuated state. The luminous fog is reminiscent of some Impressionist painting[1]

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1. Cf. supra p.128re. Monet and Pissarro. See also D. Porter's reference to Charles's early impressions of Emma:

> Various passages hint at her spirited directness or her passionate nature and the justly celebrated description of her standing on the threshold of the farm on an early spring day possess the luminous quality we associate with Impressionist canvasses at their finest. [sic]

D. Porter, 'Gustave Flaubert's middle-class tragedy', Forum for Modern Language Studies, January 1977, pp. 59-69.

where scenes are set in a haze of soft colours. The use of 'vacillaient' and 'flottait', suggestive of fluidity, adds to the multiplicity of effects produced.

A scene of darkness, fog, and movement in contrast to light is created when Frédéric accompanies Mme. Arnoux through the foggy streets:

> Le crépuscule amassait de l'ombre autour d'eux... un lourd brouillard,... puait dans l'air... À cause du pavé glissant, ils oscillaient un peu; il lui semblait qu'ils étaient tous les deux comme bercés par le vent, au milieu d'un nuage.
> L'éclat des lumières, sur le boulevard, le remit dans la réalité. (86)

The sense of movement while the couple, as if isolated from the rest of the world, walk envelopped by the fog, carries erotic overtones. The brightness of the lamp-light brings Frédéric sharply back to reality.

During the political changes, the streets become brilliant with light, shade and movement:

> Des lanternes vénitiennes, suspendues aux maisons, formaient des guirlandes de feux. Un fourmillement confus s'agitait en dessous; au milieu de cette ombre, ... brillaient des blancheurs de baïonnettes. (308)

The contrast of the gay, fiery lanterns and shining bayonets in the midst of shadow and moving people expresses something of the excitement prevailing.

Travel and the fluctuations of light and dark, indirectly evoking movement in the passage of carriages, is another aspect of this subject of light and shade. Frédéric accompanies Mme. Arnoux back to Paris, together with her sleeping child:

> ...toutes les maisons étaient closes, un réverbère, çà et là, éclairait l'angle d'un mur, puis on rentrait dans les ténèbres; une fois, il aperçut qu'elle pleurait. (104)

The alternating light and shade indicate the movement of the carriage and enable Frédéric to see Mme. Arnoux's tears.

Another example can be seen in the description of Frédéric returning to Paris after inheriting his uncle's fortune. A series of contrasting visual images is created:

> La lanterne, suspendue au siège du postillon, éclairait les croupes des limoniers. Il n'apercevait... que les crinières des autres chevaux qui ondulaient comme des vagues blanches; leurs haleines formaient un brouillard... et la lourde voiture, d'un train égal, roulait sur le pavé... Parfois,... le four d'un boulanger projetait des lueurs d'incendie, et la silhouette monstrueuse des chevaux courait sur l'autre maison en face.. (121)

The light of the lantern, the undulating whiteness of the horses' manes[1] and the firelight are set in contrast

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1. For discussion of use of 'onduler', see section on Movement, pp. 195-203.

to the surrounding darkness, the mist created by the horses' breath and the great shadows thrown on the house opposite. The use of 'égal' indicates the smooth regular sound of the passage of the carriage and, maybe, is even evocative of Frédéric's blissful state, unspoilt by any intruding factor. More commonly Flaubert uses 'inégal' in connection with movement to indicate disharmony.[1]

Perhaps the most skilful piece of writing denoting the combined effect of light, shade, and movement can be seen in Madame Bovary, in the passage where Emma and Rodolphe sit together at night, shortly before their planned flight:

> La lune, toute ronde et couleur de pourpre, se levait à ras de terre... Elle montait vite entre les branches des peupliers, qui la cachaient de place en place, comme un rideau noir, troué. Puis elle parut, éclatante de blancheur.... elle laissa tomber sur la rivière une grande tache, qui faisait une infinité d'étoiles; et cette lueur d'argent semblait s'y tordre jusqu'au fond, à la manière d'un serpent sans tête couvert d'écailles lumineuses. Cela ressemblait aussi à quelque monstrueux candélabre, d'où ruisselaient, tout au long, des gouttes de diamant en fusion. La nuit douce s'étalait autour d'eux; des nappes d'ombre emplissaient les feuillages. (MB 234)

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1. See section on 'inégalité', pp. 206-211 for general discussion.

The moon is initially described with a warm colour, evocative of previous descriptions of sunsets which are associated with passion.[1] The dark branches of the poplars with moonlight shining through them are likened to 'un rideau noir troué' - a characteristic device of Flaubert's by which an object in nature is likened to some domestic article. There are other occasions when a parallel is drawn with costly materials or articles associated with the 'salon' as, for example, in another description of the night, when Frédéric exchanges views with Mme. Arnoux:

> La nuit devant eux, s'étendait comme
> un immense voile sombre, piqué d'argent (103)

If we continue to examine the passage from Madame Bovary, we may note how the quality of the moonlight reflected in the river is described in a variety of ways: as a patch of light producing an infinite number of stars; as a glow of silver twisting like a headless snake covered with shiny scales, and as an enormous candelabra glittering with diamond drops. The light is then contrasted again with the shadows of the overhanging foliage. The sophistication and wealth of the 'salon' is repeated in the imagery of the silver of the river, the candelabra and the diamonds. Light, which by its very nature is never still, is evoked here with a multiplicity of connotations. One does feel, on this occasion, that though the scene is presented through Emma's eyes, it is in fact Flaubert's awareness of the sensuous beauty inherent in the various qualities of reflected light that is being described.

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1. Cf. supra, p.126.

2 (iv) Light and texture

In dealing with this subject there are occasions when it is hard to make a sharp distinction when analysing effects of light - whether they are related purely to texture or to movement as well. Light, by its very nature, is not constant and reflected light on silk or satin, for example, has a shimmering quality very close to mobility. For this reason, I have included passages in this section where movement is understood, even if not actually expressed. The first two passages describe interiors and the following passages, ladies' appearances. The section ends with two unusual examples of imagery.

When Frédéric makes his first visit to the Arnoux household:

> Il n'éprouvait plus aucun trouble. Les globes des lampes, recouverts d'une dentelle en papier, envoyaient un jour laiteux et qui attendrissait la couleur des murailles tendues de satin mauve. (63)

The combined effect of the delicate textures, subdued colour and soft light contribute to Frédéric's state of inner contentment.

A sumptuous scene of glittering light and rich texture can be seen in the description of the Dambreuses' dining-room:

> Les grandes torchères, comme des bouquets de feu, s'épanouissaient sur les tentures; elle se répétaient dans les glaces;...le buffet ressemblait à un maître-autel de cathédrale ou à une exposition d'orfèverie, - tant il y avait de plats, de cloches, de couverts et de cuillers en argent et en vermeil, au milieu des cristaux à facettes qui entre-croisaient, par-dessus les viandes, des lueurs irisées. (178-9)

The wealth of the home and of the feast is emphasised by these details of texture and various forms of light and reflections. Frédéric is naturally impressed.

Light as it falls on ladies' dresses and the particular quality of light reflected on shot-silk are recurring motifs. When Frédéric unexpectedly comes face to face with Mme. Arnoux on his way to visit Deslauriers, he is stunned by the sudden apparition:

> Le soleil l'entourait; - et sa figure ovale, ses longs sourcils, son châle de dentelle noire,... sa robe de soie gorge-de-pigeon, le bouquet de violettes au coin de sa capote, tout lui parut d'une splendeur extraordinaire. (283)

The synthesis of light and textures creates an image of striking beauty and femininity. The shot-silk accentuates the shimmering of the sunlight as it falls on her dress. Similar effects are created in Madame Bovary in the scene where Emma stands beneath her sunshade, taking leave of Charles at les Bertaux:

> L'ombrelle de soie, gorge-de-pigeon, que traversait le soleil, éclairait de reflets mobiles la peau blanche de sa figure. (MB 20)

The reflected light, as it moves over her face, emphasises the fineness of her skin and the silk sunshade has all the connotations of femininity. Again we note the reference to 'soie gorge-de-pigeon', the iridescent qualities of which accentuate the reflections of sunlight.

A different type of scene is presented at a dinner given by Mme. Dambreuse, where the hostess herself is given prominence by the effect of light falling on her gown:

> On avait mis dans les arbres deux ou trois lanternes chinoises; le vent les agitait, des rayons colorés tremblaient sur sa robe blanche. Elle se tenait, comme d'habitude, un peu en arrière dans son fauteuil,...; on apercevait la pointe d'un soulier de satin noir. (375)

The swaying movement of the lanterns and the quivering, coloured light on the white material, coupled with the black satin shoe create a coquettish, even seductive image.

Two passages, where imagery is used in connection with light reflected on silky materials, stand out by virtue of their minute accuracy and economy of words; also as examples of a type of imagery rare in Flaubert. In general, his use of metaphor is highly conventional, as was illustrated at the beginning of the section on Light, but in these instances it is surprisingly

original. As Frédéric mounts the steps to the Dambreuse home:

> De grands arbres emplissaient la cage de l'escalier; les globes de porcelaine versaient une lumière qui ondulait comme des moires de satin blanc sur les murailles. (177-8)

Imagery helps to describe the fluid quality of the light in the motifs of both water and material. The concept of undulating movement of soft light is conveyed by the use of 'ondulait' and the comparison with the watered-silk finish of white satin - a surface which naturally has associations with water and shimmering light.[1]

Lights as they are reflected in the Seine are also described in terms of material:

> Les becs de gaz s'alluminaient; et la Seine, verdâtre dans toute son étendue, se déchirait en moires d'argent contre les piles des ponts. (41)

The smooth greenish surface of the water as it lapped against the piers and reflected the lamplight, broke into glinting eddies which resembled silver watered-silk.

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1. For discussion of use of 'ondulait' in this passage see section on Movement, p.200.

SOUND

Flaubert often speaks of sounds: in most instances, one kind of sound is heard against the background of another. The juxtaposition gives added emphasis to both and also conveys a sense of the author's extreme sensitivity to a multiplicity of sound-impressions, creating a certain atmosphere or causing disharmony. Most of us are normally aware of one predominant sound at a given time, but Flaubert seems to have been extremely sensitive to irregularities and complexities of sound, the one adding to or interrupting the other.

To examine this subject, it seems possible to group the various examples according to type:

1. Sound used symbolically and in imagery
2. Sound in its literal sense
    (i) Single sounds and combinations of sounds
    (ii) Sound and texture
    (iii) Sound and silence
    (iv) Absence of sound.

1. Sound used symbolically and in imagery

An interesting example of sound used symbolically - a rare instance, in fact, for Flaubert normally presents sense-impressions merely as sense-impressions and not with metaphorical or symbolic intention - occurs when the harpist arrives on board the 'Ville-de-Montereau' and starts to play:

> C'était une romance orientale, où il était question de poignards, de fleurs et d'étoiles. L'homme en haillons chantait cela d'une voix mordante; les battements de la machine coupaient la mélodie à fausse mesure; il pinçait plus fort: les cordes vibraient, et leurs sons métalliques semblaient exhaler des sanglots,... (24)

For Frédéric, the music sounds like human sobs. We may observe also how, on this occasion, the juxtaposition of the tattered harpist and the beautiful Mme. Arnoux in her rich clothing is sharply reminiscent of the macabre blind beggar who leers at Mme. Bovary as she returns in the coach from her reunions with Léon in Rouen.[1] She hears his voice which:

> ...se traînait dans la nuit, comme l'indistincte lamentation d'une vague détresse; et à travers la sonnerie des grelots, le murmure des arbres et le ronflement de la boîte creuse, elle avait quelque chose de lointain qui bouleversait Emma. Cela lui descendait au fond de l'âme comme un tourbillon dans un abîme et l'emportait parmi les espaces d'une mélancolie sans bornes. (MB 317)

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1. A. Fairlie, Flaubert: Madame Bovary, Studies in French Literature 8, 1969, pp. 36-7 for reference to the beggar's symbolic role.

The sadness of the harpist's music seems to foretell the fruitlessness of Frédéric's love for Mme. Arnoux, as the ghastly rotting of the beggar's flesh forebodes Emma's death. As Frédéric throws his last coin to the harpist in a gesture of benediction, so Emma, on one occasion, threw her last five-franc piece to the beggar as a mark of disgust. In both there is a sense of finality.

There are other parallels too: as the harpist's sad melody is heard against the rhythmical throb of the ship's engines, so Emma hears the beggar's plaintive song against the background of chiming bells, the whisper of the wind in the trees and the rattle of his empty box. The degree to which they react to the music, however, is not the same - Frédéric senses a vague melancholy while Emma's sadness is intense, 'sans bornes'.[1] Emma's nature was, in fact, a far more passionate one than Frédéric's.[2]

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1. For references to Flaubert's use of 'infini', see p.156 note (1).

2. Cf. C. Baudelaire, 'Madame Bovary par Gustave Flaubert', L'Art Romantique, Louis Conard, 1925
In Baudelaire's view, the energy and passion in Emma's character are masculine traits - Flaubert has put much of himself into his heroine:
'... madame Bovary, pour ce qu'il y a en elle de plus énergique et de plus ambitieux, et aussi de plus rêveur, madame Bovary est restée un homme.'

Another example where sound is not referred to in a purely literal sense can be seen in the description of the smoke belching from the funnel of the 'Ville-de-Montreau':

> ...la cheminée crachait avec un râle lent et rythmique son panache de fumée noire; (20)

The personification of the sound makes the visual image more striking. Effects of colour and slow rhythmic movement also contribute to sharpening the scene.

2. Sound in its literal sense.

(i) Single sounds and combinations of sounds

This section can be subdivided usefully into:

a) Sounds on board ship

b) City sounds - traffic, church-bells etc.

c) Delicate sounds connected with ladies' wear, domestic scenes, and the 'salon'

d) Sounds connected with introspective states

e) Sounds connected with idyllic or romantic scenes

a) The first examples of a multiplicity of sound-impressions used in their literal sense occur in the scene on board ship: passengers embark, the crew make preparations and:

> ...le tapage s'absorbait dans le bruissement de la vapeur, qui, s'échappant par des plaques de tôle, enveloppait tout d'une nuée blanchâtre, tandis que la cloche, à l'avant, tintait sans discontinuer. (19)

The different types of sound heard against one another - the general commotion on board almost drowned by the roaring from the ship's funnel and accompanied by the regular clanging of the ship's bell - accentuate the quality of each respectively, through contrast.

Frédéric observes Mme. Arnoux as she drinks:

> Elle trempait ses lèvres dans son verre, cassait un peu de croûte entre ses doigts; le médaillon de lapis-lazuli, attaché par une chaînette d'or à son poignet, de temps à autre sonnait contre son assiette.

This is followed by:

> ...Ceux qui étaient là pourtant,
> n'avaient pas l'air de la remarquer (25)

The tiny clinking sound of the medallion against the plate is noticed by Frédéric alone. She appears isolated from her surroundings - not in the eyes of the other passengers, but in Frédéric's, because of his heightened perceptions.

b) Among the city scenes is the occasion of Frédéric's first visit to Mme. Arnoux's house, when he walks home afterwards in a state of profound happiness. The lights and mist by the banks of the Seine are described, followed by:

> ...tous les bruits se fondaient en
> un seul bourdonnement;...(68)

and as he stops on the bridge, a clock strikes:

> À l'horloge d'une église, une heure
> sonna, lentement, pareille à une voix
> qui l'eût appelé. (68)

This particular use of 'bourdonnement' to describe the background sounds of a busy city or domestic interior or, metaphorically, to express a confused state of mind, is a point we find repeatedly in connection with sound. A little later, for example, his hopes dashed, Frédéric wanders in a suicidal state through the streets at night:

> .....des sons lointains s'élevaient, se
> mêlant au bourdonnement de sa tête,... (95)

The combination of distant sounds and the buzzing in his head adds to his dazed condition.

Looking again at the example on page (68), we find yet another point of interest: the juxtaposition of two types of sound - the continual dull sound of the traffic and the chime of the church clock. In his blissfully happy state, these sounds acquire emotive qualities: the church chime is heard as a human voice calling him and the rumble of the city is agreeable to his ears. 9/146

The motif of church chimes ringing, to evoke a certain atmosphere, appears more frequently in Madame Bovary. The melancholy of the countryside or the depressed boredom that Emma feels are often depicted against the background of monotonously chiming church bells..

At Tostes:

> Comme elle était triste, le dimanche, quand on sonnait les vêpres! Elle écoutait, dans un hébétement attentif, tinter un à un les coups fêlés de la cloche...Au loin, parfois, un chien hurlait: et la cloche, à temps égaux, continuait sa sonnerie monotone qui se perdait dans la campagne. (MB 74-5)

The indescribable monotony and melancholy of the scene are heightened by the use of 'égaux' and the howling of the dog.[1] At Yonville-L'Abbaye, the same melancholy predominates:

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1. For more detailed discussion of 'égal', see section on 'inégalité', pp. 204-5.

> Au loin, les bestiaux marchaient, on n'entendait ni leurs pas, ni leurs mugissements; et la cloche sonnant toujours, continuait dans les airs sa lamentation pacifique. (MB 131)

To return to the city sounds in L'Éducation sentimentale, as Frédéric strolls along the boulevards:

> ... les charrettes, les boutiques recommençaient, et la foule l'étourdissait, le dimanche surtout...; c'était un immense flot ondulant sur l'asphalte, ... dans une rumeur continue; (84)[1]

Here the rumble of traffic is equated with the anonymity of the mass of moving populace. In a later description, Frédéric sees all Paris in relation to Mme. Arnoux:

> ... toutes les rues conduisaient vers sa maison:... Paris se rapportait à sa personne, et la grande ville avec toutes ses voix, bruissait, comme un immense orchestre, autour d'elle. (87)

Where Frédéric's vision is coloured by his infatuation for Mme. Arnoux, sounds come to have metaphorical connotations to his ears, the city sounds play like an orchestra for the lady he loves.

Another scene set against the background of city sounds appears at the end of the work, where all sit by M. Dambreuse's death-bed, waiting for him to expire:

> On entendit, pendant deux heures, le roulement sourd des charrettes, défilant vers les Halles....des coups de marteau, des cris de vendeurs ambulants, des éclats de trompette; tout déjà se confondait dans la grande voix de Paris qui s'éveille. (406)

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1. For comparison with a street-scene in Dubliners see infra, pp. 228-230.

The juxtaposition of the silence and motionlessness of the death-scene and the sounds and activity of the busy city give us a sense of the relentlessness and irony of life. A human being dies but life goes on and has to go on, regardless of the individual. A comparable scene is described in Madame Bovary, where Emma's coffin is being carried to the grave:

> Toutes sortes de bruits joyeux emplissaient l'horizon: le claquement d'une charrette....le cri d'un coq... la galopade d'un poulain... (MB 397)

A cacophony of background sounds at the horse races is characteristically set in contrast with the sound of a bell, as Frédéric and Rosanette look on:

> ...d'autres vendaient le programme des courses, d'autres criaient des cigares, un vaste bourdonnement s'élevait;.... une cloche...tinta. (226)

There is again the familiar use of 'bourdonnement' denoting background noise.

c) Delicate sounds of ladies' dresses in movement, telling us something about the type and quality of the material, and the hum of subdued voices at parties, are recurring motifs, For instance, at Rosanette's party:

> Avec un froufrou d'étoffes, les femmes,... s'assirent les unes près des autres; (144)

and at Mme. Dambreuse's:

> C'était un bruissement continu de robes sur les tapis; les dames... poussaient de petits ricanements, articulaient deux ou trois mots...(151)

These soft sound impressions help to evoke an air of fashionable elegance. At a subsequent party given by Mme. Dambreuse a visual image is created through allusions to light and texture, and the whole description of the interior concludes with:

> ...une musique légère vibrait, au loin, comme un bourdonnement d'abeilles. (179)

Once again the figurative use of 'bourdonnement' conveys the impression of soft background sound.

Later at the same party, women's voices have another quality - that of birds cheeping:

> ...et le murmure des voix féminines, augmentant, faisait comme un caquetage d'oiseaux. (182)

Flaubert may even be hinting at the senseless nature of their continual chatter. At another of Mme. Dambreuse's parties, an atmosphere of discreet elegance is conveyed by contrasting sounds:

> Un murmure de voix discrètes s'élevait. On entendait des escarpins craquer sur le tapis. (259)

The atmosphere of another type of interior is evoked by means of sound - that of the sick-room of Mme. Arnoux's daughter Marthe. It is not described

visually at all, in fact:

> ....l'on entendait le bruit d'une cuiller contre un verre, et tout ce frémissement de choses délicatement remuées qui se fait dans la chambre d'un malade. (134)

A complete image is created through sound-impressions alone, which we ourselves become aware of through Frédéric's heightened sensibility.

d) Flaubert sometimes introduces sound linked to introspective states of mind. Prior to the duel between Cisy and Frédéric, Cisy is seen to be suffering intolerably and in a state of hyper-awareness of all kinds of sensations. Sound, too, acquires added significance:

> ...la sussurration des mouches se confondait avec le battement de ses artères. (252)

Putting together these two unlike sounds helps to indicate Cisy's inner apprehension. Anxiety is indicated on several other occasions through the effects of sound. The ringing of the door-bell at Mme. Arnoux's house at Auteuil is reminiscent of a previous visit of Frédéric's to her Paris home though at the latter, sound is met by silence:

> Un carillon retentit, s'apaisa par degrés, et l'on n'entendait plus rien. (81)

At Auteuil:

> La sonnette de la grille,.. prolongeait son carillon, et on était toujours longtemps avant de venir. Chaque fois, il éprouvait une angoisse.... Puis il entendait claquer, sur le sable, les pantoufles de la bonne (294)

Frédéric's particular attention to these two sounds conveys to us both his anxiety and his anticipation.

Another example of sound conveying a mental state can be seen when Frédéric waits in vain for Mme. Arnoux to keep her rendez-vous with him:

> Il souffrait du froid aux pieds. Il se sentait dissoudre d'accablement. La répercussion de ses pas lui secouait la cervelle. (302)

In Madame Bovary, Charles's happy inner state, on one of his early visits to Emma's home, is expressed in a similar way:

> ...il entendait seulement le battement intérieur de sa tête, avec le cri d'une poule, au loin, qui pondait dans les cours. (MB 25)

When Rodolphe takes leave of Emma and dreams of seducing her, his preoccupied state of mind is conveyed by means of sounds:

> ...Rodolphe n'entendait... que le battement régulier des herbes qui fouettaient sa chaussure, avec le cri des grillons tapis au loin sous les avoines; (MB 155)

e) In Flaubert, the effects of idyllic and romantic scenes are often heightened through the characters' susceptibility to sounds of various kinds. For instance, when Frédéric receives the news of his inheritance, he sees himself happily with Mme. Arnoux once again, surrounded by elegance:

> ...il entendait piaffer son cheval et le bruit de la gourmette se confondant avec le murmure de leurs baisers. Cela se renouvellerait tous les jours, indéfiniment. (117)

In this case, a combination of sounds with erotic implications describes a state of ideal bliss to which he sees no end. This particular use of 'indéfiniment' is to be found repeatedly for describing extreme states of either happiness or misery, and is a familiar motif of Flaubert's.[1]

During their idyllic meetings at Auteuil, Frédéric and Mme. Arnoux are intensely aware of smell, touch and sound:

> Ils jouissaient délicieusement de la senteur des feuilles humides, ils souffraient du vent d'est...; un bruit de pas, le craquement d'une boiserie leur causaient des épouvantes comme s'ils avaient été coupables; (297)

Mention of these sound impressions helps to intensify the idea of their heightened perceptions. When Mme. Arnoux visits Frédéric's apartment, she asks to see his small garden:

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1. For further references to this feature see infra, p. 156 note (1).

> On était aux premiers jours d'avril. Les feuilles des lilas verdoyaient déjà, un souffle pur se roulait dans l'air, et de petits oiseaux pépiaient, alternant leur chanson avec le bruit lointain que faisait la forge d'un carrossier. (209)

The effects of this spring scene are heightened by the alternating sound-impressions - reminiscent of a piece of music with the melody played against the steady beat of the accompaniment.

The use of 'murmurer' to denote the soft background sound of water playing and intensifying idyllic scenes is also a repeated motif. While battles are raging in Paris, Frédéric and Rosanette spend their time in blissful oblivion in the forests of Fontainebleau and sleep peacefully to the gentle sound of the water outside:

> ... ils s'endormirent au murmure du jet d'eau dans la cour. (351)

This is curiously reminiscent of Frédéric's dreams of an ideal state, early on in the work:

> Frédéric se meublait un palais à la moresque, pour vivre couché sur des divans de cachemire, au murmure d'un jet d'eau...(72)

The same tranquil sound of a fountain playing is mentioned when Frédéric returns to Paris and is happily reunited with his old friend Deslauriers - all is bathed in sunlight:

> ...et l'on entendait les rires des enfants, avec le murmure continu que faisait la gerbe du jet d'eau. (132)

In St. Julien l'Hospitalier, Julien in his palace passed his days to the accompaniment of this same gentle sound, though the term 'murmure' is not actually used:

> Il y avait des jets d'eau dans les salles,...et partout un tel silence que l'on entendait le frôlement d'une écharpe ou l'écho d'un soupir. (TC 69)

The pervading silence is intensified by contrast with the faint sounds that are audible. We note the characteristic allusion to 'frôlement', indicating light sound.

The sound of water flowing slowly over the river-bed, with its romantic associations, fills Emma with nostalgia, once Léon has left. She is plunged in gloom and the sight and sound of the river they had once walked beside reminds her of her old happiness:

> La rivière coulait toujours, et poussait lentement ses petits flots le long de la berge glissante. Ils s'y étaient promenés bien des fois, à ce même murmure des ondes sur les cailloux couverts de mousse. (MB 146)

A point of interest in this assortment of sound-impressions is the repeated use of phrases to denote uninterrupted sound: the ship's bell rings 'sans discontinuer', the city sounds produce 'une rumeur continue', ladies' dresses rustled in 'un bruissement continu', the

fountain flows with a 'murmure continue' and the chiming of church bells is described with the verb 'continuer'. Flaubert's deep consciousness of this quality of sound possibly links up with his feeling for the infinite, as we see in his use of 'infini' and 'indéfiniment' in relation to extremes of happiness and unhappiness.[1] Flaubert's use of 'indéfinissable' in connection with perfumes is also related to the concept of the infinite, in the sense of being beyond the limits of definition.

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1. For reference to the emotive quality in Flaubert's use of such terms as: 'infini', 'indéfini', 'indéfinissable', continu', 'continuel', 'sans discontinuer' etc., see particularly:

   ES : pp. 19,23,27 (three references), 38,42,68,84, 117,132,151,210,223,252,271,297,385,389,403,449.

   MB : pp. 39,75,131,232,304,317,335.

   S : p. 27,151.

   TC : p.69.

2. (ii) Sound and texture

It is interesting to observe that in all the passages quoted below - passages in which texture is associated with textiles, silk is the one material mentioned.[1]

An image is created by combining the effects of sound and texture when Frédéric rings the bell at the Arnoux residence:

> Puis il ébranla, d'un coup furieux, le lourd gland de soie rouge. Un carillon retentit, s'apaisa par degrés, et l'on n'entendit plus rien. (81)

The texture of the bell-pull points to a wealthy home; the sound of the bell as it remains unanswered conveys a sense of Frédéric's apprehension.[2]

There are various allusions to the sounds made by the materials of ladies' gowns, sometimes with an erotic sense, as, for instance, when Léon recognises Emma in the cathedral at Rouen:

> ... un froufrou de soie sur les dalles, la bordure d'un chapeau, un camail noir... C'était elle! (MB 286)

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1. For further references to use of 'soie' see supra, p.75-6, note 1.

2. Cf. supra, pp.51-2 for further comments on ES 81 and ES 294.

Or in the reference to Frédéric's adoration of Mme. Arnoux:

> Il connaissait la forme de chacun de ses ongles, il se délectait à écouter le sifflement de sa robe de soie quand elle passait auprès des portes, il humait en cachette la senteur de son mouchoir; ... (74)

The sense of smell also contributes to the effect made by the silk dress as Mme. Arnoux passes. Rosanette's dress, at a later point in the story, similarly arouses emotion in Frédéric:

> ... il lui entourait la taille à deux bras; le pétillement de sa robe de soie l'enflammait. (232)

There is an ironic turn of events when Mme. Arnoux's possessions are put up for auction. Rosanette's sudden appearance on the scene comes as an unwelcome shock to Frédéric who is there in the company of Mme. Dambreuse:

> Un craquement de soie se fit à son oreille. Rosanette le touchait. (442)

Her presence is announced by the sound of her silk dress.

The fusion of three women's lives at this point, with the particular associations they have for Frédéric, imposes a peculiar kind of unity within the structure of the work - as if all the threads were being pulled together before they finally break. Paradoxically, only Mme. Arnoux, who was not physically present, appears again in Frédéric's life: the other two, who had hoped to triumph over her financial ruin, become worthless in his eyes.

The theme of chance in L'Éducation sentimentale is one of the book's outstanding features:

> Le hasard se manifeste à chaque instant dans le roman, aussi bien dans la succession des événements que dans la collocation des personnages.[1]

We look on while one rendez-vous impinges on another; M. Arnoux's gifts are shuttled backwards and forwards between his wife and Rosanette - a fact to which Frédéric happens to be a witness; and the various women in Frédéric's life appear, on occasion, at the same party. One of the most unwelcome coincidences for Frédéric was the event quoted in the above passage where Mme. Dambreuse and Rosanette are both present at the auction. As Alison Fairlie so justly states:

> the intervention of ... coincidence is pushed to a pitch of stylised crescendo.[2]

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1. J. Bruneau, 'Le role du hasard dans L'Éducation sentimentale', Europe, revue mensuelle, Sept. Oct. Nov. 1969, pp. 101-107. See particularly p.101.

2. A. Fairlie, 'Some patterns of suggestion in L'Éducation sentimentale' in Studies in Honour of A.R. Chisholm, 1969.

2. (iii) Sound and silence

The subject of 'les silences' in Flaubert's work is one which has been commented on by a good number of critics, though more from the point of view of what Flaubert himself has left unsaid than from the point of view of actual silences between characters in his work. Proust admired Flaubert for his ability to indicate the passing of time by means of 'un blanc' - he expresses so much by suggesting rather than stating:

> A mon avis la chose la plus belle de l'Éducation Sentimentale, ce n'est pas une phrase, mais un blanc. Flaubert vient de décrire, de rapporter pendant de longues pages, les actions les plus menues de Frédéric Moreau. Frédéric voit un agent marcher avec son épée sur un insurgé qui tombe mort. "Et Frédéric, béant, reconnut Sénécal!" Ici un "blanc", un énorme "blanc" et, sans ombre d'une transition, soudain la mesure du temps devenant au lieu de quarts d'heure, des années, des décades (je reprends les derniers mots que j'ai cités pour montrer cet extraordinaire changement de vitesse, sans préparation):
>
> "Et Frédéric, béant, reconnut Sénécal.
>
> Il voyagea. Il connut la mélancolie des paquebots, les froids réveils sous la tente, etc. Il revint.
> Il fréquenta le monde, etc.
> Vers la fin de l'année 1867, etc.[1]

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1. M. Proust, 'A Propos du "Style" de Flaubert', Chroniques, Gallimard, 1949, pp. 193-211.

In the present analysis, I have taken examples of silence contrasted with sound and also moments of complete silence, all of which are suggestive rather than explanatory, in much the same way as the passing of time is indicated in the passage quoted above. These moments of silence between characters are pregnant with meaning and occur where words are superfluous - where there is total emotional and spiritual harmony between two people, or on occasions when there is complete dis-harmony and no communication can be made, even in words.

One of the first examples of sound contrasted with silence occurs when Frédéric and Deslauriers at Nogent dream of their future - they were to be inseparable friends:

> Ils parlaient de ce qu'ils feraient plus tard, quand ils seraient sortis du college.....Des doutes succédaient à leurs emportements d'espoir. Après des crises de gaieté verbeuse, ils tombaient dans des silences profonds. (31)

And as they walk home through country lanes on a summer evening:

> ...Les rues désertes sonnaient sous leurs pas;... la grille s'ouvrait, on remontait l'escalier; ils étaient tristes comme après de grandes débauches. (31)

The contrast of their excited talk and subsequent silence and the sound of their footsteps on the empty roads conveys a sense of the close youthful friendship of the two. The emptiness of the roads serves to isolate them from

their environment, as does the silence which paradoxically illustrates the harmony between them. Another point of contrast - the gay verbosity and the sadness they feel on their return is characteristic of the inexplicable changes of mood in the young.

A little later in the same description, sound and silence are cnntrasted with brightness and darkness to create an amazing multiplicity of effects. As the young men walk, they can see the highway leading to Paris:

> ... la grande route descendait en ligne droite, et des prairies se perdaient au loin, dans les vapeurs de la nuit. Elle était silencieuse et d'une clarté blanchâtre. ...la chute de la prise d'eau,... murmurait avec ce gros bruit doux que font les ondes dans les ténèbres. (33)

A most unusual image is created here with the silence and brightness of the road made more striking by their immediate association with the soft sound of falling water in the darkness. This could be expressed as a formula:

$$\frac{\text{Silence}}{\text{Sound}} + \frac{\text{Brightness}}{\text{Darkness}}$$

A very different type of scene can be observed when Frédéric sits in Pellerin's studio, feeling inwardly at peace:

> Le calme de cette grande pièce, où l'on n'entendait que le trottinement des souris... et jusqu'au ronflement du poêle, tout le plongeait d'abord dans une sorte de bien-être intellectuel. (73)

Frédéric's acute awareness of sound in his contented mood is borne out by the contrast of the small sounds with the calm in this room. The concept of 'bien-être intellectuel' is an unusual one in Flaubert in that he combines the sensation of well-being, normally a physical one, with the abstract 'intellectuel'. Perhaps he wants to convey the physical sense of calm in the exterior surroundings producing an inner calm in Frédéric's mind.

The emptiness and melancholy of the Quartier Latin in the summer vacation is sharply conveyed by the enumeration of little sounds alternating with silence:

> Les grands murs des collèges, comme allongés par le silence, avaient un aspect plus morne encore; on entendait toutes sortes de bruits paisibles, des battements d'ailes dans des cages, le ronflement d'un tour, le marteau d'un savetier;...Au fond des cafés solitaires, la dame du comptoir bâillait entre ses carafons remplis...(83)

These low sounds of birds' wings fluttering, a lathe at work and the cobbler's hammering are characteristic of the domestic life in that area and are audible through contrast with the general silence.

When Frédéric visits Mme. Arnoux at St. Cloud, he overhears her singing:

> Elle faisait des gammes, des trilles, des arpèges. Il y avait de longues notes qui semblaient se tenir suspendues; d'autres tombaient précipitées,... et sa voix, passant par la jalousie, coupait le grand silence, et montait vers le ciel bleu. (100)

The delicate quality of her voice becomes more meaningful and touches him more deeply through contrast with the silence of the surroundings.

The journey back to Paris through the night, after Frédéric hears about his inheritance, is described with a multiplicity of sense-impressions: light and shade, movement, sound and silence:

> ... les chaînettes de fer sonnaient, les glaces tremblaient dans leurs châssis;...Aux relais, quand on avait dételé, il se faisait un grand silence pendant une minute. Quelqu'un piétinait en haut... (121-2)

After he drops off to sleep:

> Un bruit sourd de planches le réveilla, on traversait le pont de Charenton, c'était Paris. (122)

Different kinds of sound denoting movement are set in contrast to the silence when the carriage is at a standstill.

Another type of scene can be observed at Rosanette's home where, after the extravagance of her fancy-dress ball, the new day dawns:

> Enfin tous, n'en pouvant plus, s'arrêtèrent; et on ouvrit une fenêtre...
>
> Le grand jour entra, avec la fraîcheur du matin. Il y eut une exclamation d'étonnement, puis un silence. (146)

Words are superfluous before the magnificance and purity of the new day, set against the tawdriness and false glamour of the revellers:

> ...le maquillage, coulant avec la sueur, découvrait des faces blêmes,... (147)

Sound denoting movement is contrasted with silence when Frédéric enters the courtyard of M. and Mme. Dambreuse's residence:

> Une file de lampions brûlaient sur les deux portes cochères; et des domestiques, dans la cour, criaient pour faire avancer les voitures... Puis, tout à coup, le bruit cessait dans le vestibule. (177)

The elegance and refinement of the interior is indicated by the lack of noise and commotion.

There are instances when periods of silence contrasted with sound indicate disharmony or controlled feelings of anger. At M. Arnoux's factory in Creil, the workers' discontent is implied by their silence which is contrasted with the sound of their angry, heavy breathing:

> Ils se penchèrent sur leurs pièces, sans murmurer; on devinait leur colère au souffle rauque de leur poitrine. (219)

Their silence is charged with unexpressed emotion, as is the silence after M. and Mme. Arnoux have quarrelled:

> ... il se fit un grand silence; et tout, dans l'appartement, sembla plus immobile. ...; on entendait le tic-tac de la pendule avec la crépitation du feu. (189)

In the silence, the other sounds become all the more meaningful. When Mme. Arnoux can no longer contain herself, the silence is broken by a sob.

Silence and isolation are suggested rather than directly expressed, through contrast with sounds, to indicate Mme. Arnoux's feeling of desolation when she hears about Frédéric's supposed engagement:

> Elle s'approcha de la fenêtre pour respirer.
>
> De l'autre côté de la rue, sur le trottoir, un emballeur... clouait une caisse..., rien ne bougeait autour d'elle. C'était comme une désertion immense...
>
> Il lui semblait descendre dans quelque chose de profond, qui n'en finissait plus. La pendule sonna trois heures. Elle écouta les vibrations du timbre mourir. (271)

The sound of a clock striking or a church bell growing fainter is a familiar motif, associated with a feeling of melancholy.[1] Mme. Arnoux's despair is described in physical terms of descending into some void to which there is no bottom. Again we note the concept of the infinite - here in relation to endless misery.[2] It may also be linked with the physical sensation Flaubert himself experienced in his nervous crises in which he was conscious

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1. Cf. supra, pp.147-8, MB 74-5, MB 131.

2. For reference to the particular use of 'infini', see supra, p. 156 note (1).

of a whirling motion and a sinking sensation:[1]

> C'était dans ma pauvre cervelle un tourbillon d'idées et d'images où il me semblait que mon moi sombrait comme un vaisseau sous la tempête.[2]

Idyllic scenes by the riverside, in the forest, or simply in the midst of nature, when the relationship between a couple is charged with unexpressed emotion, are repeatedly described by contrasting silence and sound. For instance, Louise Roque, passionately in love with Frédéric and he even contemplating marriage with her, walk in Nogent by the bank of the river:

> ...il y eut un silence. Ils n'entendaient que le craquement du sable sous leurs pieds avec le murmure de la chute d'eau. (272)

The term 'murmure' in Flaubert often conveys a sense of the idyllic.[3]

When Frédéric and Rosanette travel joyfully through the forests of Fontainebleau, they feel remote from all the troubles of the world:

> Quand la voiture s'arrêtait, il se faisait un silence universel; seulement on entendait le souffle du cheval dans les brancards, avec un cri d'oiseau très faible, répété. (351)

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1. For discussion of Flaubert's nervous crises and their relation to his writing, see Introduction pp. 31-6

2. Gustave Flaubert: Correspondance, (~~Troisième~~ Quatrième série 1854-61), letter to Mlle. Leroyer de Chantepie, May 18th. 1857, ~~Bibliothèque — Charpentier,~~ ~~4925~~, p.180.

3. For previous references to 'murmure', see supra pp.154-5.

As they continue on foot:

> Le sérieux de la forêt les gagnait; et ils avaient des heures de silence où ....ils demeuraient comme engourdis dans une ivresse tranquille....il l'écoutait parler pendant que les oiseaux gazouillaient.. (353)

After Rosanette recounts the story of her life:

> Les feuilles autour d'eux susurraient...; et le silence était coupé à intervalles rapides par le broutement de la vache qu'on ne voyait plus. (357)

The periods of silence convey a sense of complete emotional harmony between the two, and such sounds as they are aware of give poignancy to the beauty around them. In this calm, the low sounds of the horse snuffling, the twittering of birds, the whisper of leaves and the munching of a cow become audible. They are significant through contrast with the prevailing silence. In an earlier passage, when Frédéric visits Mme. Arnoux at Auteuil, spiritual and emotional harmony is conveyed in a slightly different way:

> ...il y eut dans leurs dialogues de grands intervalles de silence....; un bruit de pas, le craquement d'une boiserie, leur causaient des épouvantes comme s'ils avaient été coupables; (297)[1]

The sounds encroach on their relationship rather than enhance the harmony they feel in the state of silence.

In Madame Bovary, in the tale of each successive relationship, moments of silent harmony are recorded set in contrast to small sounds. For instance, when Charles and

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1. See supra p.153 for further comments on this passage.

Emma first begin to feel drawn to each other:

> ...elle travaillait le front baissé; elle ne parlait pas, Charles non plus... et il entendait seulement le battement intérieur de sa tête, avec le cri d'une poule, au loin, qui pondait dans les cours. (25)

As Emma and Léon return from visiting the wet-nurse and walk along the riverside:

> C'était l'heure du dîner dans les fermes, et la jeune femme et son compagnon n'entendaient... que la cadence de leurs pas...les paroles qu'ils se disaient, et le frôlement de la robe d'Emma qui bruissait tout autour d'elle. (MB 113)[1]

In the scene where Rodolphe and Emma are united once more, silence is implied by allusion to the clarity with which many different kinds of sound are heard:

> Ils ne se parlaient pas... La tendresse des anciens jours leur revenait au coeur, abondante et silencieuse.....Souvent quelque bête nocturne...dérangeait les feuilles, ou bien on entendait par moments une pêche mûre qui tombait toute seule de l'espalier. (MB 234)

Their union is complete - words are superfluous, and the beauty of the night is intensified by the small sounds the couple are aware of.

The development of Léon's relationship with Emma takes place in Rouen. During their 'lune de miel', nature acquires a beauty they had never been aware of before. At nightfall, they take a boat and the sounds

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1. For further examples of use of 'frôlement', 'frôler', section on Movement, infra, pp. 183/186.

made by the oars in their rowlocks and the gentle lapping of the water as the rope trails behind are heard distinctly as the couple sit in rapturous silence:[1]

> Ils restaient au fond, tous les deux cachés dans l'ombre, sans parler. Les avirons carrés sonnaient entre les tolets de fer; et cela marquait dans le silence comme un battement de métronome, tandis qu'à l'arrière la bauce qui traînait ne discontinuait pas son petit clapotement doux dans l'eau. (MB 304)[2]

The rhythmical sound of the oars 'comme un battement de métronome' is reminiscent of another reference to musical time in the regular throb of the ship's engine:

> ...les battements de la machine coupaient la mélodie à fausse mesure. (24)

Silence has quite a different implication in the scenes of violence during the political rioting. A foreboding silence is broken by ominous sounds of street-fighting:

> De temps en temps, une estafette passait au grand galop, puis le silence recommençait. Des canons en marche faisaient au loin sur le pavé un roulement sourd et formidable; le coeur se serrait à ces bruits différant de tous les bruits ordinaires. Ils semblaient même élargir le silence, qui était profond, absolu, - un silence noir. (361)

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1. Cf. A. Fairlie, Flaubert: Madame Bovary, Studies in French Literature 8, 1969, p.22-3 for discussion of Flaubert's use of precise sense-impressions to evoke a variety of atmosphere and events.

2. For further reference to 'infini', 'sans discontinuer' etc., see supra p.156 note (1).

This passage is self-explanatory - the sounds emphasising the dreadful silence. The use of a transferred epithet in 'un silence noir' intensifies the fearful aspect of the silence.

2. (iv) Absence of sound

Moments of complete silence serve to strengthen a point or emphasise a situation; sometimes to the point of giving a sense of finality or of the absolute. Many kinds of thought and emotion are expressed in this way, and it is even possible to trace the stages in the relationship between Frédéric and Mme. Arnoux by pin-pointing moments of silence.

Frédéric's ideal, platonic love for Mme. Arnoux from the beginning expresses itself in silent adoration:

> Il l'aimait sans arrière-pensée, sans espoir de retour, absolument; et dans ces muets transports,... il aurait voulu couvrir son front d'une pluie de baisers. (103)

After the episode of the cashmere shawl, he is captivated by Mme. Arnoux's beauty in her state of unhappiness. He communicates silently with her, by a gesture; -

> Elle répliqua "oui" de la même façon; et ce muet échange de leurs pensées était comme un consentement, un début d'adultère. (190)

Words were not needed to express their mutual understanding. Silence as a negative indication, however, can be observed when Frédéric's hopes to win Mme. Arnoux on his visit to Creil seem dashed:

> Il s'inclina sans dire un mot. Elle répondit silencieusement à son salut.
> Ce qu'il éprouva d'abord, ce fut une stupéfaction infinie. Cette manière de lui faire comprendre l'inanité de son espoir l'écrasait. (223)

However, the unexpressed but mutual love which they do, in fact, feel for each other is proved later by an unexpected confrontation:

> Leur premier mouvement fut de reculer; puis, le même sourire leur vint aux lèvres, et ils s'abordèrent. Pendant une minute, aucun des deux ne parla. (283)

Their silence is more than expressive.

Silence precedes Frédéric's agonising and fruitless wait for Mme. Arnoux at the rendez-vous they had fixed:

> Alors, il y eut un grand silence. La pluie fine...ne tombait plus. Des nuages s'en allaient, balayés mollement par le vent d'ouest. (302)

The silence somehow isolates him from his surroundings.

They meet for the last time and when the moment comes to leave, there is a note of finality about their separation: the love that had remained unfulfilled would remain so for ever.:

> Tous les deux ne trouvaient plus rien à se dire. Il y a un moment, dans les séparations, où la personne aimée n'est déjà plus avec nous. (451)

We also feel here that Flaubert is inserting a little bit of his own philosophy.

Another example of emotion expressed in a period of silence occurs when Dussardier has been urged to declare his idea of love and women:

> - Eh bien, fit-il en rougissant, moi, je voudrais aimer la même toujours!

This is met by complete silence:

> ...il y eut un moment de silence,
> les uns étant surpris de cette candeur,
> et les autres y découvrant, peut-être,
> la secrète convoitise de leur âme. (76)

Each of the company is struck, in his own way, by the absolute truth of the remark - silence is a more expressive response than words.

Silence expressing complete lack of contact between two people is also exemplified; for instance when M. and Mme. Arnoux are at table:

> Il assistait aux dîners où Monsieur et Madame, en face l'un de l'autre, n'échangeaient pas un mot; (191)

Also, when the cries of Hippolyte, as his leg is amputated, are heard by Charles and Emma:

> ...ils se regardèrent silencieusement, presque ébahis de se voir, tant ils étaient par leur conscience éloignés l'un de l'autre. (MB 219)

Prior to the duel between Cisy and Frédéric, there is an expressive silence - words are not needed to show the company's apprehension and cruel instincts:

> Il y eut un silence. On se regarda. Toutes les figures avaient quelque chose d'effaré ou de cruel. (252)

Moments of complete harmony and contentment, when Frédéric and Rosanette walk in the forest of Fontainebleau, are made more poignant by their silence:

> ....couchés sur le ventre au milieu de l'herbe, ils restaient l'un en face de l'autre, à se regarder...s'en assouvissant toujours...ne parlant plus. (355)

The ease with which Frédéric wins Mme. Dambreuse's favours surprises him and reminds him of previous similar moments of silence in other relationships.

> ...il y eut comme une suspension universelle des choses. Alors, des soirs semblables, avec des silences pareils, revinrent dans son esprit, confusément. (394)

Their momentary happiness is expressed better in silence than in words.

In concluding this section on absence of sound it is interesting to observe that in Madame Bovary, moments of silence between the characters, unaccompanied by any other sound, are extremely rare. Perhaps this could be put down to the fact that in her successive erotic relationships, Emma never has a sense of the absolute; she is never totally oblivious of the world or totally in harmony with the man she loves. Spiritually she is not fulfilled but tries misguidedly to find complete happiness through more and more erotic experiences.

MOVEMENT

As a sense-impression, movement has so many aspects that naturally it is impossible to examine every context in which movement appears. For the purposes of this analysis, I have selected a limited number of examples, relating mostly to travel of various kinds, street scenes, scenes in nature - often connected with the wind - and situations where movement carries romantic or erotic associations, connected with the 'salon' and with ladies' dress. It is interesting to observe the frequency with which certain words are used to denote movement; for example: 'frôler' to express the light touch or movement of horses, carriages, ladies' footsteps; 'rouler' to express the smooth rolling of carriage wheels; 'tourbillonner' to express the whirling motion of dust, smoke or birds; and 'onduler' to express figuratively the sensuous quality of a wide variety of movements, from the lyrical waving of corn in the fields to the fever-ridden trembling of a sick boy. The interrelation of movement and sound and Flaubert's particular sensitivity to the movement transmitted by the nature of surfaces over which people travel - another interesting facet of this subject - has already been discussed.[1]

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1. See Introduction, pp.35-6

The subject of movement can be divided into the following sections:

1. Movement and imagery
2. Movement in its literal sense
   - (i) Movement and combinations of movement
   - (ii) Movement and sound
   - (iii) Movement and light
   - (iv) Lack of movement
3. Movement and the particular use of 'onde', 'onduler' and 'flot'.

1. Movement and imagery

Before examining the various categories of movement in Section 2, which appear purely as sense-impressions, we may look at some examples of the use of movement in imagery. A wide range of subjects is described in these terms, from materials to the waves of the sea. The first occasion is when the river-boat left the quai Saint-Bernard. It is probably through Frédéric's eyes that the scene is presented, for we are told that he stood on deck watching regretfully as the city passed out of sight:

> ... et les deux berges, peuplées de magasins, de chantiers et d'usines, filèrent comme deux larges rubans que l'on déroule. (19)

This rather unlikely comparison of the buildings on the river-banks slipping smoothly by like two ribbons being unwound is an example of one of Flaubert's familiar devices in which objects in their natural surroundings are likened to articles associated with ladies' dress.[1] It is repeated in Madame Bovary when a very similar device is used to describe the highway along which Charles so contentedly travelled to work in the early days of his marriage with Emma:

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1. For further examples see supra, p.102note (1)

> Et alors, sur la grande route qui étendait sans en finir son long ruban de poussière...il s'en allait ruminant son bonheur,[1] (MB 39)

We note also the idea of infinity, so often associated with extreme happiness.

Extended imagery using the effects of movement and also scent, to express emotion, can be seen in the description of Emma's first feelings for Rodolphe:

> La douceur de cette sensation pénétrait ainsi ses désirs d'autrefois, et comme des grains de sable sous un coup de vent, ils tourbillonnaient dans la bouffée subtile du parfum qui se répandait sur son âme. (MB 174)

We note the characteristic use of 'tourbillonner' to convey the sense of a whirl of emotions.

During their clandestine meetings on cold winter nights:

> Des massifs d'ombre...se bombaient dans l'obscurité, et...frissonnant tous d'un seul mouvement, ils se dressaient et se penchaient comme d'immenses vagues noires ...pour les recouvrir. (MB 199)

The movement of the shadows is like waves which are helping to hide the couple. The waves of the sea are also associated with constant movement, something unchanging and hence eternal.

Imagery related to movement seems to appear relatively infrequently. Where it does occur, it helps

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1. See supra, p.102 note (1) for further examples.

to accentuate the emotive qualities in what is being described - whether it is contentment as Charles rides along the highway, the awakening of erotic emotion in Emma or illicit passion as she and Rodolphe remain clasped in each other's arms, hidden by the deep shadows.

2. Movement in its literal sense

(i) Movement and combinations of movement

Movement connected with different modes of travel - for example, travel by ship, train, carriage or on foot - seems to fall naturally into one category. In some instances, movement is directly described; in others, indirectly suggested through passing scenery. In most cases it paradoxically creates clear visual images. As the 'Ville de Montereau' starts off, different qualities of movement are mentioned:

> ... des gouttelettes de rosée coulaient sur les cuivres; le pont tremblait sous une petite vibration intérieure, et les deux roues, tournant rapidement, battaient l'eau. (20)

These observations are probably being made by Flaubert himself for we are told that Frédéric was preoccupied with the scenery as it passes by.

Similarly, the train journey Frédéric makes to Creil is described in terms of the scenery passing by on either side and also by the steady movement of the train in contrast to the elusive smoke:

> À droite et à gauche des plaines vertes s'étendaient; le convoi roulait; les maisonnettes des stations glissaient comme des décors, et la fumée de la locomotive versait toujours du même côté ses gros flocons qui dansaient sur l'herbe quelque temps, puis se dispersaient. (213)

Different qualities of movement qualify the puffs of smoke, the steady passage of the train and the station-offices as they slip by.

Travel by carriage is described on a variety of occasions, often reflecting the psychological state of the occupant. On disembarking from the 'Ville-de-Montereau', Frédéric takes his carriage. In his blissfully happy mood, everything moves with ease: the rested horses 'trottaient lentement', and the quick light progress of the carriage is reflected in the movement of the scene on either side of the road:

> Des champs moissonnés se prolongeaient à n'en plus finir. Des lignes d'arbres bordaient la route, des tas de cailloux se succédaient. (27)

This sense of the infinite recurs a little later in

> Il s'abandonnait à une joie reveuse et infinie. (27)

As we have seen before, the term 'infini' is often used in Flaubert to express extreme happiness or unhappiness and a whole range of not easily definable emotions connected with a sense of the eternal and boundless.[1]

After Frédéric pays his first visit to M. Dambreuse he catches sight of a lady entering a carriage outside the Dambreuse residence:

> ....la voiture, avec un bruit sourd, se mit à rouler sur le sable. (37)

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1. For further references see supra, p.156 note (1).

The smooth, steady passage of the carriage is indicated and also the elegance and ease with which it disappeared:

> Le cocher lacha les rênes, le cheval frôla la borne brusquement, et tout disparut. (38)

'Frôler' carries connotations of lightness and delicateness - even femininity on occasion.

A street-scene full of various types of movement in passing carriages is observed by Frédéric on the Champs Élysées:

> Des femmes, nonchalamment assises dans des calèches, et dont les voiles flottaient au vent, défilaient près de lui, au pas ferme de leurs chevaux, avec un balancement insensible qui faisait craquer les cuirs vernis...le vent froid soulevait des tourbillons de poussière,... les roues se mettaient à tourner plus vite, et tous les équipages descendaient au grand trot la longue avenue, en se frôlant, se dépassant, s'écartant les uns des autres, puis, sur la place de la Concorde, se dispersaient. (40-1)

Through this description of so many different kinds of movement, a clear visual image is created - the fluttering of the ladies' veils, the firm step of the horses, the whirling of the dust, and the final speedy disappearance of each carriage, going its separate way. We note the characteristic use of 'tourbillon' and 'frôler', indicating the lightness of swirling dust and the movement of the passing horses. An interesting comparison can be made here with a similar scene in Zola's La Curée, where elegant ladies in carriages pass by, driven by well-dressed

coachmen. Flaubert's description conveys so many variations in speed and quality of movement through minute observation like, for example, the 'balancement insensible qui faisait crąquer les cuirs vernis', which is a synthesis of movement, sound and texture. Zola's description has a solidity and uniformity that convey a pictorial image of colour and light but do not give the reader a real sense of movement:

> Les premières voitures se degagèrent et, de proche en proche, toute la file se mit bientôt à rouler doucement. Mille clartés dansantes s'allumèrent... Ce pétillement des harnais et des roues, ce flamboiement des panneaux vernis dans lesquels brûlait la braise rouge du soleil couchant,... et les toilettes riches débordant des portières, se trouvèrent ainsi emportés dans un grondement sourd, continu, rythmé par le trot des attelages.[1]

Flaubert's taste for the terms 'frôler' and 'tourbillon', with their connotations of light touch and swirling movement, is evident again when M. and Mme. Arnoux return to Paris with Frédéric from St. Cloud:

> Le cheval marchait au pas; les branches des arbres frôlaient la capote.... De lents tourbillons de poussière se levaient. (104)

The slow progress of the carriage is underlined by the 'lents tourbillons de poussière' which rose in its wake.

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1. Émile Zola, La Curée, Paris. Charpentier, 1925, pp. 3-4, (First published 1860).

The glamour of fast travel, on the other hand, can be seen as Frédéric and Rosanette speed by on their way to the races,attracting the attention of onlookers:

> La voiture prit un train plus rapide; le bruit des roues faisait se retourner les passants,.... Frédéric se laissait aller au bercement des soupentes. La Maréchale tournait la tête, à droite et à gauche, en souriant. (225)

A clear visual image is created through these various types of movement - the quick motion of the carriage and the gentle rocking of its springs. The complete self-assurance and self-satisfaction of the travellers is also implied.

Another occasion when Flaubert presents the attraction of rapid movement is at the horse-races where the excitement of the scene is brought out by different types of movement and by bright colour:

> Les spectateurs .. suivaient... l'évolution des jockeys; on les voyait filer comme des taches rouges, jaunes, blanches et bleues...à l'autre bout... ils semblaient...ne plus avancer que par une sorte de glissement....Mais revenant bien vite, ils grandissaient; leur passage coupait le vent; le sol tremblait, les cailloux volaient; l'air s'engouffrant dans les casaques des jockeys, les faisait palpiter comme des voiles. (228)

As Frédéric goes on foot through the Quartier Latin, another street-scene attracts his attention through different kinds of movement. In the quiet of the summer afternoon:

> ...dans l'atelier des repasseuses, des linges frissonnaient sous des bouffées du vent tiède...un omnibus, qui descendait en frôlant le trottoir, le faisait se retourner; (84)

Once more there is the use of 'frôler' to describe quick movement and also the periodic light, warm puffs of wind which help to create the atmosphere of the quiet summer afternoon with little going on.[1]

Other types of movement have other connotations. At Rosanette's fancy-dress party, Frédéric notices the ladies sitting together:

> ...l'on entrevoyait au bord des corsages des frémissements d'eventails, lents et doux comme des battements d'ailes d'oiseau blessé. (143)

Or at Mme. Dambreuse's party:

> ...un courant d'air parfumé circulait sous le battement des éventails (182)

The gentle movement of the fans is something essentially feminine - in the one case associated rather morbidly with the fluttering of a wounded bird, in the other with the perfumed air. An interesting parallel can be seen in Salammbô with the same motif of the fluttering of a wounded bird - in this case, in connection with the sound of the slaves singing:

> Tout à coup, ils entendirent un chant plaintif,... qui s'abaissait et remontait dans les airs comme le battement d'ailes d'un oiseau blessé. (S 6)

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1. For further discussion of Flaubert's use of 'bouffée', see section on Smell, pp. 215-6.

An extraordinary image is created through the movement of live birds which are allowed to fly into the room at Rosanette's ball:

> Les petits oiseaux de la volière... envahirent la salle, tout effarouchés, voletant autour du lustre, se cognant contre les carreaux, contre les meubles; et quelques-uns, posés sur les têtes, faisaient au milieu des chevelures comme de larges fleurs. (146)

The movement of these birds in their unnatural surroundings adds to the artificiality of the scene.

Another, and most interesting, aspect of movement, in this case conditioned by a psychological state, can be seen when Frédéric finally finds Mme. Arnoux's new residence after his stay in Nogent:

> Frédéric alla de l'estaminet chez Arnoux, comme soulevé par un vent tiède et avec l'aisance extraordinaire que l'on éprouve dans les songes. (128)

Here we approach another question - that of subjective reality: distance and time do not exist for him in his joyous state.[1] Emma, too, as she sits miserably on a bench in Rouen remembering her youth, is conscious of the subjective nature of time:

> ... il lui semblait qu'elle était là... depuis l'éternité. Mais un infini de passions peut se tenir dans une minute... (MB 335)

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1. Margaret Mein in her article 'Flaubert, a precursor of Proust', French Studies, July 1963, pp. 218-237, claims that Flaubert had 'an acute sense of the relativity of time', thus foreshadowing Proust who shared Bergson's belief that:
'Le temps...est élastique; les passions que nous ressentons le dilatent, celles que nous inspirons le rétrécissent.'
(M.Proust, A l'Ombre des Jeunes Filles en Fleur II, p.18.)
She also believes that, through his 'exploration in depth, Flaubert has prepared the way for Proust, and both stand indomitable in their search to renew time.'(p.228) For further discussion, see Introduction, pp.15-18

2. (ii) Movement and sound

Before examining the examples where reference is made to the literal use of movement and sound to produce characterisation or to convey a particular atmosphere, we may look at an incident which is interesting because of its symbolic nature. Louise Roque rings at the porter's lodge of Frédéric's apartment late at night, in the hope of finding him at home:

> La porte s'entrebâilla et le concierge répondit à sa demande:
> - Non! ....
> - Je vous dis que non! Voilà près de trois mois qu'il ne couche pas chez lui!
> Et le petit carreau de la loge retomba nettement, comme une guillotine. (380)

Movement evoking sound in the abrupt closing of the porter's window symbolises the finality of the episode, the end of the relationship and the shock and disappointment suffered by the young girl.

The effects of movement and sound used in their literal sense can be seen in an indirect characterisation of Mlle. Vatnaz:

> ...une grande femme mince entra, - avec des gestes brusques qui faisaient sonner sur sa robe de taffetas noir toutes les breloques de sa montre (54).

In this concise description, the sense-impression of movement, sound and even texture contribute to creating the image of a rather eccentric, active woman.

Another succinct description, in this case full of lyrical connotations, can be seen when Frédéric and Deslauriers walk in the early morning on their terrace:

> ... le soleil se levait, des brumes légères passaient sur le fleuve, on entendait un glapissement dans le marché aux fleurs à côté; - et les fumées de leurs pipes tourbillonnaient dans l'air pur qui rafraîchissait leurs yeux encore bouffis; (71-2)

Different qualities of movement and sound combine with the effects of sunlight and pipe-smoke to create an idyllic scene in which the two young men sense the optimism of youth:

> ...ils sentaient... un vaste espoir épandu.

We note the characteristic use of 'tourbillonner' and also the curious juxtaposition of the mist - a natural phenomenon, the pipe smoke associated with man, and the unpolluted air of the early morning. Each, respectively, serves as a contrast to the other and the three intermingle to produce the total effect.

2. (iii) Movement and light

These two sense-impressions are mostly associated with the idyllic or, in Madame Bovary, with materials or symbolic scenes. Louise and Frédéric sit by the riverside at Nogent:

> Le soleil frappait la cascade; les blocs verdâtres du petit mur où l'eau coulait apparaissaient comme sous une gaze d'argent se déroulant toujours. Une longue barre d'écume rejaillissait au pied en cadence. Cela forma ensuite des bouillonnements des tourbillons, mille courants opposés, et qui finissaient par se confondre en une seule nappe limpide. (275)

The different types of movement of the water in the sun-light produce a visual image and we notice once more the characteristic use of 'tourbillon'. The green rocks under the moving water appearing as gauze material being unrolled is a type of simile found repeatedly in Flaubert's work.[1]

At the country residence at Auteuil, Frédéric sits and talks with Mme. Arnoux in a state of ecstasy:

> ...les rayons du soleil, traversant la jalousie, tendaient depuis le plafond jusque sur les dalles comme les cordes d'une lyre, des brins de poussière tourbillonnaient dans ces barres lumineuses. (296)

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1. For further examples, see supra p.102, note (1).

Again there is the use of 'tourbillonner' and the ethereal quality of the dust and shafts of sunlight. What is significant here is the quality of Frédéric's attention which is revealed in the precision with which he observes the tiny particles of dust swirling in the light. It is Frédéric's hypersensitivity at this particular moment that makes him so perceptive. One is reminded of a similar incident in Madame Bovary where Emma's state of heightened awareness enables her to observe with equal accuracy.. She is walking by the river with Léon:

> Quelquefois, à la pointe des joncs ou sur la feuille des nénufars, un insecte à pattes fines marchait ou se posait. Le soleil traversait d'un rayon les petits globules bleus des ondes qui se succédaient en se crevant; ... (MB 113)

The precision with which the insects' delicate legs and the translucent quality of the globules of water are observed bears witness to Emma's perceptiveness.[1]

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1. The degree to which Flaubert's characters are aware of their surroundings is a disputed point. It has been said that the scenes of natural beauty are, in fact, being viewed through the eyes of the artist, for the characters are not sufficiently sensitive to be fully aware of the richness of detail. A. Fairlie, in her analysis of the passage quoted above, modifies this view. She claims that 'these details, even when the characters are half-conscious of them, make the substance of their lives and create the particular atmosphere behind what will stand in their memory.' A. Fairlie, Flaubert: Madame Bovary, Studies in French Literature 8, 1969, p.71.

Continued on following page...

If we look at some further examples of the combined effects of movement and light in Madame Bovary the sensuous quality of rich materials can be seen when M. Lheureux tempts Emma with his wares:

> ...il donnait un coup d'ongle sur la soie des écharpes,.....et elles frémissaient avec un bruit léger en faisant, à la lumière verdâtre du crépuscule, scintiller comme de petites étoiles, les paillettes d'or de leur tissu. (MB 124)

This succinct description also combines the sense-impressions of sound and texture and is a characteristic example of the art of Flaubert to create an impression of reality through the world of the senses.

Two curious parallels appear in Madame Bovary, symbolising the ease with which Emma puts an end to her association with her past. Movement and light help to create a scene and the simile of the butterfly - a beautiful yet short-lived creature, intensifies the impression conveyed. Before leaving Tostes, she threw her wedding bouquet into the fire:

Footnote 1 continued from previous page...

> Another critic, D.A. Williams, has interpreted the scene from an entirely symbolic point of view: 'The insect, delicately balanced above the water, anticipates the way Emma will stand trembling on the stepping-stones.' This crossing on the stepping-stones he has also explained in symbolic terms: 'When the possibility of erotic experience presents itself for the first time, it has lost much of its earlier power to alarm, with the result that, as Emma is poised in playful hesitation over the diminutive puddles, her fear dissolves into laughter which simultaneously welcomes and mocks so slight a danger.' This seems to be a slightly exaggerated interpretation. D.A. Williams, 'Water-imagery in Madame Bovary', Forum for Modern Language Studies, Jan. 1977, pp. 70-84.

> Elle le jeta... Il s'enflamma.....
> Puis ce fut comme un buisson rouge
> sur les cendres, et qui se rongeait
> lentement. Elle le regarda brûler.
> Les petites baies de carton éclataient,
> les fils d'archal se tordaient, ...
> et les corolles de papier.... se
> balançant le long de la plaque comme
> des papillons noirs, enfin s'envolèrent
> par la cheminée. (MB 79-80)

The different qualities of movement in the gradual burning up of the bouquet until the remains eventually fly away up the chimney reveal again something of Emma's intense concentration and perceptiveness. At another crucial point in Emma's life, when she starts her relationship with Léon in Rouen:

> Une fois, au milieu du jour, en
> pleine campagne, au moment où le soleil
> dardait le plus fort contre les vieilles
> lanternes argentées, une main nue...
> jeta des déchirures de papier qui se
> dispersèrent au vent et s'abattirent plus
> loin, comme des papillons blancs, ...
> (MB 291)

With an air of finality she puts an end to her period of virtuous abstention and the effects of movement and light complete the visual image, as the pieces of her torn letter scatter in the wind while the carriage continues on its way,

> à stores tendus, ... plus close qu'un
> tombeau et ballottée comme un navire.[1]

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1. Cf. infra, p. 202.

2. (iv) Lack of Movement

Unlike lack of sound, lack of movement seems to occur only at rare intervals and serves to emphasise a certain point. Frédéric is first introduced as:

> Un jeune homme de dix-huit ans,.. qui... restait auprès du gouvernail, immobile. (19)

He appears thoughtful and isolated as he watches Paris pass by. A parallel to this is offered in the last glimpse he gets of Mme. Arnoux on board ship:

> Elle était près du gouvernail, debout. Il lui envoya un regard où il avait tâché de mettre toute son âme. Comme s'il n'êut rien fait, elle demeura immobile (26).

Her lack of reaction is emphasised by her lack of movement.

In Madame Bovary, Léon's suppressed emotion after he has taken leave of Emma is expressed in the same way:

> ... il s'arrêta, et il se cacha derrière un pilier, afin de contempler une dernière fois cette maison blanche... il resta droit, plus immobile qu'un mur de plâtre. Léon se mit à courir. (MB 142)

Just as moments of silence, charged with emotion, are often more expressive than words could have been, moments of stillness are equally expressive, either of intensity of thought or emotion.

3. Movement and the particular use of 'onde', 'onduler' and 'flot'

This aspect of movement is naturally connected with the subject of water-imagery in Flaubert - a wide field which has been studied by many scholars.

J.P. Richard has analysed the theme of fluidity in Flaubert's work in general[1] and B. Masson has made a particular study of water-imagery in L'Éducation sentimentale, pointing out how the water theme dominates the work in the form of ' - le fleuve, la fluidité, le rêve -'.[2] D.A. Williams examines the symbolic implications of the literal and metaphorical allusions to water in Madame Bovary.[3] Basic to all this type of interpretation are the theories of Bachelard on the association of water with dreams. Preoccupation with water, he believes, denotes a certain type of disposition, as does fire:

> Qui joue avec le feu se brûle, veut se brûler, veut brûler les autres. Qui joue avec l'eau perfide se noie, veut se noyer... L'eau est l'élément de la mort jeune et belle, de la mort fleurie...[4]

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1. J.P. Richard, Littérature et sensation, Seuil, 1954.

2. B. Masson, 'L'Eau et les rêves dans L'Éducation sentimentale', Europe - revue mensuelle, Sept., Oct., Nov., 1969, pp. 82-100.

3. D.A. Williams, 'Water imagery in Madame Bovary', Forum for Modern Language Studies, January 1977, pp.70-84.

4. G. Bachelard, L'Eau et les Rêves, J. Corti, 1942, p.112-3.

Further discussion of this concept and reference to the 'Bachelardian' method of analysis can be found in the Introduction.[1]

In the present analysis, I am not attempting to discuss the complex subject of water-imagery but only to pin-point some examples of the particular use of 'onde', 'onduler' and 'flot', used both literally and figuratively as expressions denoting certain qualities of movement. These terms appear with great frequency and it is interesting to observe the particular effect they produce. Sometimes they are used in their literal meaning to describe simple scenes in nature, conveying an impression of wave-like motion, as, for example, when Frédéric notices:

> ... des trains de bois qui se mettaient à onduler sous le remous des vagues, (20)

as the 'Ville-de-Montereau' travelled down the Seine.

Or as Frédéric and Deslauriers walk on summer evenings in the countryside:

> Les soirs d'été, quand ils avaient marché longtemps par les chemins pierreux .... et que les blés ondulaient au soleil, tandis que des senteurs d'angélique passaient dans l'air, ... (31)

In the forest of Fontainebleau, Rosanette and Frédéric come across a sandy hill:

> Sa surface, vierge de pas, était rayée en ondulations symétriques; (353)

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1. See supra, p. 27

Or in Hérodias:

> Des maisons se tassaient contre sa base, dans le cercle d'un mur qui ondulait suivant les inégalités du terrain;.. (TC 91)

In the one case we have regular undulations; in the other, irregular - a recurring motif of Flaubert's.[1] This is again repeated in Madame Bovary at Rouen, in the description of the oil on the surface of the river:

> ...l'on voyait sur la rivière de larges gouttes grasses, ondulant inégalement sous la couleur pourpre du soleil, ... (MB 303)

The use of 'inégalement' creates an impression of variation in size and movement of the drops of oil, dependent on the movement of the water on which they are floating.[2]

In most cases, the terms 'onduler', 'onde' and 'flot' are used in various kinds of imagery, either in simile form, or in metaphors to describe, first, abstract qualities such as affection, love, the soul and dreams of future happiness or, second, simply to describe types of movement associated with a range of different subjects: people, animals, light, ladies' appearance and so on.

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1. For further references see section on 'inégalité', pp. 206-210.
2. A. Fairlie, Flaubert: Madame Bovary in Studies in French Literature 8, 1969, p.23 for Flaubert's use of sense-impressions. See also Introduction supra pp. 29-30

If we take the first category which refers to human sentiment, an obvious example may be found when Frédéric takes leave of Mme. Arnoux after his first visit:

> ...il sentait monter du fond de lui-même... un afflux de tendresse qui l'énervait, comme le mouvement des ondes sous ses yeux (68).

When she has left his study, he still feels her presence in the room:

> Et les flots d'une tendresse infinie le submergeaient (210).

The image of the waves is repeated in 'submergeaient' and the strength of his love is intensified by the use of 'infinie'. When Rosanette bears a son, her love for him is expressed in the same terms as Frédéric's for Mme. Arnoux. She smiles at Frédéric:

> ... et, comme submergée sous les flots d'amour qui l'étouffaient, elle dit d'une voix basse:
> - Un garçon, là, là! en désignant près de son lit une barcelonnette. (413)

Léon in his love for Emma often felt:

> ... son âme s'échappant vers elle, se répandant comme une onde sur le contour de sa tête. (MB 314)

Flaubert seems to associate waves, which by their very nature are of the essence of movement and carry a sense of the eternal, with excessive human love. Emma's dreams of future happiness with Rodolphe are also described in these terms:

> ... les jours, tous magnifiques, se ressemblaient comme des flots; et cela se balançait à l'horizon, infini, harmonieux, bleuâtre et couvert de soleil. (MB 232)

Once again the infinite is equated with the state of perfect bliss.[1]

The second category is related to movement of physical objects and natural phenomena. People and groups of people in certain situations are described using this form of imagery. The crowded Parisian streets are seen as:

> ... un immense flot ondulant sur l'asphalte,... (84)

Frédéric fears possible revolution and sees in his mind's eye:

> ... un flot d'hommes aux bras nus envahissant le grand salon de Mme. Dambreuse,... (158)

and when, to Frédéric's amazement, Deslauriers marries Louise Roque at Nogent,

> ... tout à coup, dans un flot de bourgeois en cravate blanche, deux nouveaux mariés parurent. (445)

'Flot' in these three cases expresses the idea of a moving mass of unidentified individuals.

The use of 'onduler' to express slow, sensuous movement associated with animals is another recurring motif. It is seen in connection with horses' manes as Frédéric returns by night to Paris:

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1. For further references see supra, p.156 note (1).

> Il n'apercevait au delà que les crinières des autres chevaux qui ondulaient comme des vagues blanches; (121)

or in the description of the avenue full of carriages,

which was like:

> ...un fleuve où ondulaient des crinières, des vêtements, des têtes humaines, ... (231)

in Madame Bovary at the fair where:

> ... sur la longue ondulation de tous ces corps tassés, on voyait se lever au vent, comme un flot, quelque crinière blanche, (MB 162)

or in St. Julien l'Hospitalier, as the stags die and we see:

> ...l'ondulation de leurs ventres s'abaissant par degrés. Puis tout fut immobile. (TC 63)

Here we also note the contrast of movement and the stillness which follows.

The flowing quality of light is another recurring motif. At the Dambreuse residence:

> ...les globes de porcelaine versaient une lumière qui ondulait comme des moires de satin blanc sur les murailles. (178)

The undulating movement of the light is likened to the shimmering texture of white satin, with a watered-silk finish.[1] The same association of light and movement can be seen in the description of the forest of Fontainebleau,

> ...la lumière coulait comme une onde sur le gazon; (357)

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1. For further references to satin, watered-silk etc. see supra, pp.75-6, note (1).

In Salammbô, the undulating serpent's tail is likened to a glittering river in a song which Salammbô sings and which Mâtho later repeats:

> Alors elle se mit à chanter les aventures de Melkarth...
> "Il poursuivait dans la forêt le monstre femelle dont la queue ondulait sur les feuilles mortes comme un ruisseau d'argent;" (S 14)

This imagery has an interesting parallel in Madame Bovary where the reflection of the moonlight in the river as it flowed by is likened to the movement of a snake with glittering scales:

> ...cette lueur d'argent semblait s'y tordre jusqu'au fond, à la manière d'un serpent sans tête couvert d'écailles lumineuses. (MB 234)

The sensuous movement of ladies' dress and hair, or in women themselves, constitutes a form of attraction for Frédéric. At Mme. Dambreuse's party:

> Leurs longues jupes, bouffant autour d'elles, semblaient des flots d'où leur taille émergeait,.. (181)

He is struck by the flowing quality of Mme. Arnoux's hair:

> Tout un côté de ses cheveux lui faisait un flot noir sur l'épaule droite; (216)

And in the case of Mlle. Vatnaz:

> ...tout à coup, devant cette femme laide qui avait dans la taille des ondulations de panthère, Frédéric sentit une convoitoise énorme... (279)

The sensuous movements of her body and the animal-like attraction she has for Frédéric are described in terms of the undulating body of a panther.

The image of waves blown by the wind and the particular use of 'onde' and 'flot' can be noted in two instances: in Madame Bovary, as Emma approaches Rouen for her meetings with Léon:

> Parfois un coup de vent emportait les nuages vers la côte Sainte-Catherine, comme des flots aériens qui se brisaient en silence contre une falaise. (MB 312)

The imagery here helps to intensify the idea of the continual progress of the clouds as they are blown by the wind; the metaphorical use of 'flot' is repeated in the somewhat strange image of waves breaking in silence against a cliff. Also, when Mme. Arnoux's son Eugène is seriously ill:

> ... il frissonna dans la longueur entière de tout son corps, comme une onde sous un coup de vent; (306)

The symbolic implications of imagery in Flaubert connected with storms at sea and their rather morbid relation to death have been discussed by D.A. Williams and M. Church among others. The cab in which Emma and Léon drive off is quoted by Williams for its sinister resemblance to her future coffin:

> ...plus close qu'un tombeau et ballottée comme un navire. (MB 291)[1]

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1. D.A. Williams, 'Water imagery in Madame Bovary', Forum for Modern Language Studies, Jan. 1977, p.79.

M. Church claims that 'the entire section describing the death of Emma is dominated symbolically by the imagery of the storm at sea.'[1]

Looking over this last section, as a whole, we may ask why Flaubert has this particular predilection for 'onduler' and other related ooncepts like 'onde' and 'flot', just as he so often uses 'soie' in connection with textures. Apart from the sensuous qualities inherent in anything connected with water, individual waves are by their nature in a constant state of flux, while the sea in its entirety is a permanent element in the universe. It is equated with the unending and everlasting. Evidently these concepts of sensuousness, change and constancy were a pronounced element in Flaubert's consciousness. This also links up with his sensitivity to irregularities in movement, fluctuation in light, contrasts of brightness and darkness and sound and silence, on the one hand, and a deep feeling for the infinite on the other.

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1. M. Church, 'A Triad of Images: Nature in Madame Bovary', Mosaic, Spring 1972, p.213.

APPENDIX

THE USE OF 'inégal', inégalement', 'égal' AND 'également'

As we discovered, in the section on 'Movement', Flaubert uses these terms in a variety of often unexpected contexts. His use of them may be termed poetic, for he conveys a complexity of ideas in a single term. 'Inégal' and 'inégalement' appear more frequently than their opposites - he seems to have been more sensitive to the irregular and disharmonious than to their counterparts. This aspect of his perceptiveness has been mentioned in the Introduction.[1]

Let us first take a look at the use of 'égal' and également', of which there are fewer examples, before examining the more important subject of 'inégal' and 'inégalement'. 'Égal' and 'également' may be equated with a sense of equality in human relationships, with regular, steady movement, or with the harmonious and hence the beautiful. In L'Éducation sentimentale when Mme. Arnoux holds out her hand to take leave of her guests after Frédéric's first visit, the term 'également' is used as a revitalised metaphor - Mme. Arnoux made no differentiation between her guests which was, for Frédéric, a mark of acceptance and encouragement:

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1. See supra, pp. 33, 35-6

> ... elle la tendit <u>également</u> à Frédéric; et il éprouva comme une pénétration à tous les atomes de sa peau. (67)

'Également' is being used in its literal sense of 'equality'.

The steady rhythm and smooth, regular sound of the carriage carrying Frédéric back to Paris after receiving his inheritance from his uncle, reflects his own settled, contented state of mind:

> ... et <u>la lourde voiture, d'un train égal, roulait sur le pavé</u>.

His mind full of draams for the future, he feels at one with everything around him:

> Comme un architecte qui fait le plan d'un palais, il arrangea, d'avance, sa vie. Il l'emplit de délicatesses et de splendeurs; elle montait jusqu'au ciel; (121)

A different facet of the use of '<u>égal</u>' appears in <u>Madame Bovary</u>, when Léon first sets eyes on Emma, sitting in the firelight:

> <u>Le feu l'éclairait</u> en entier, <u>pénétrant d'une lumière crue</u> la trame de sa robe, <u>les pores égaux de sa peau blanche</u> et même les paupières.... (MB 95)

The clear beauty of her skin is expressed in most unusual terms. The sense of harmony and regularity conveyed by the use of 'égal' reminds one of the theories of beauty in Classical Greece.[1]

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1. For discussion of the Greek concept of 'beauty', see R. Fry, <u>The Arts of Painting and Sculpture</u>, Victor Gollancz, London, 1932, pp. 50-59.

   '... we may note, as common qualities of natural objects which we call beautiful, symmetry (as of two sides of a face) and regularity of surfaces and contours that are uninterrupted by sudden or unexpected changes of direction, surfaces that are inviting to the eye perhaps because of the promise of pleasure to the sense of touch.'
   (pp. 52-3)

Let us now look at Flaubert's use of 'inégal' and 'inégalité'. If we take some of his descriptions of natural scenes, we find frequent allusions to plants, flowers and trees growing in this irregular way. At Mme. Arnoux's country home at St. Cloud.

> Par les fenêtres ouvertes, on apercevait tout le jardin avec la longue pelouse...; des massifs de fleurs la bombaient inégalement'; (100)

A similar description appears in Madame Bovary when Emma and Charles arrive at the Château at La Vaubyessard. A lawn and flowering shrubs line the path:

> ...des bannettes d'arbustes, rhododendrons, seringas et boules-de-neige bombaient leurs touffes de verdure inégales sur la ligne courbe du chemin sablé. (MB 55)

An impression of abundance is first conveyed while the unexpected use of 'inégal' produces a peculiar emphasis by evoking the picture of an irregular rather than regular pattern. The same notion is conveyed by the description of the river-banks at Nogent:

> ...l'horizon...est borné par une courbe de la rivière; elle était plate comme un miroir; de grands insectes patinaient sur l'eau tranquille. Des touffes de roseaux et des joncs la bordent inégalement;... (273)

The idyllic tranquillity of the scene and the delicate movement of the insects has an interesting parallel in Madame Bovary, when Emma and Léon walk beside the river:

> Quelquefois, à la pointe des joncs ou sur la feuille des nénufars, un insecte à pattes fines marchait ou se posait. (MB 113)

The reeds along the river banks at Nogent are of varying size and are spaced unequally, as are the flowers outside Rouen Cathedral in Madame Bovary:

> ... la place,..sentait des fleurs qui bordaient son pavé, roses, jasmins, oeillets, narcisses et tubéreuses, espacés inégalement par des verdures humides... (MB 284)

The irregular sizes of patches of heather in the forest of Fontainebleau are described in a similar way:

> Rosanette...s'en allait cueillir des bruyères. Leurs petites fleurs, violettes, tassées les unes près des autres, formaient des plaques inégales,.. (353)

Variation in the height of trees is conveyed by the same unexpected use of 'inégal'. When Frédéric visits Mme. Arnoux at her country residence at Auteuil:

> Presque toujours, ils se tenaient en plein air...; des cimes d'arbres, jaunies par l'automne, se mamelonnaient devant eux, inégalement, jusqu'au bord du ciel pâle; (295-6)

The term is used again to denote an irregular surface, when Rosanette and Frédéric walk in the forest of Fontainebleau:

> Cette foule de grosses lignes verticales s'entr'ouvrait. Alors, d'énormes flots verts se déroulaient en bosselages inégaux jusqu'à la surface des vallées... (352)

If we look at the way some domestic objects and even houses are described, the impression conveyed is of an assortment of varying sizes and styles. The town of Creil, for instance, as it lies before Frédéric:

> La ville,.. avec la tour de son église, ses maisons inégales et son pont de pierre, lui semblait avoir quelque chose de gai, de discret et de bon. (214)

When Charles visits Emma's home for the first time, he is taken into the kitchen where:

> Le déjeuner des gens bouillonnait alentour, dans des petits pots de taille inégale. (MB 16)

Clear visual images are created in all these instances by virtue of the unexpectedness of the use of the term 'inégal'.

Inequality in size and height can also be noted in Salammbô. In a description of the army as it broke up into groups:

> ...l'armée se répandit bientôt sur la longeur de l'isthme.
> Elle se divisait par masses inégales. (S 24)

or where the layout of Carthage is described so vividly:

> Par derrière, la ville étageait en amphithéâtre ses hautes maisons de forme cubique...Les places publiques la nivelaient à des distances inégales; (S 57)

Again, when Mâtho stumbles in Salammbô's apartment:

> Plusieurs fois il se heurta les pieds, car le sol avait des niveaux de hauteur inégale. (S 89)

The use of 'inégal' in all these instances reinforces the visual image; in the last, it also serves to emphasise Mâtho's tentative movements as he advances towards the sleeping Salammbô. At the same time, it underlines Flaubert's own hypersensitivity to irregularities -

in this case, the unevenness of the ground - a quality which might never strike the normal observer.

There is another facet of this subject: that of light, reflections and the effects of light on water. In the scene quoted above, in Emma's kitchen, various utensils shine and reflect different kinds of light - firelight and the first shafts of early morning sunlight:

> La pelle, les pincettes et le bec du soufflet, tous de proportion colossale, brillaient comme de l'acier poli, tandis que le long des murs s'étendait une abondante batterie de cuisine, où miroitait inégalement la flamme claire du foyer, jointe aux premières lueurs du soleil arrivant par les carreaux. (MB 16)

'Inégalement' here creates the effect of flickering light and movement which is constant yet irregular in dimension. This same effect is repeated in the river scene at Rouen where the sunlight is reflected in the oily patches on the water:

> ...l'on voyait sur la rivière de larges gouttes grasses, ondulant inégalement sous la couleur pourpre du soleil, comme des plaques de bronze florentin, qui flottaient (MB 303)

The impression conveyed is of irregularity of size and movement in the drops of oil. This is conditioned by two factors - the glinting of the sun on the water's surface and the movement of the river itself. In a later description of the city of Rouen, roof-tops are seen to reflect light after the rain:

> ...les toits, tout reluisants de pluie, miroitaient inégalement, selon la hauteur des quartiers. (MB 312)

There is a clear visual image of shining roof-tops at various heights, reinforced by this particular use of 'inégalement'.

In L'Éducation sentimentale, as M. Dambreuse lies dying, a picture of light and shade is created through the use of 'inégalement' to denote irregular-sized patches of light:

> La lumière des lampes, masquée par des meubles, éclairait la chambre inégalement. (403)

This characteristic but strange use of the concept of 'inégal', reflecting Flaubert's awareness of irregularities and disharmony, seems to link up with his inclination to juxtapose contrasting qualities: light and shade, sound and silence, movement and stillness. We may see it as a sense of the duality in the nature of things, by which he shows life in a constant flux. A certain facet of a character or scene is made the more meaningful through contrast. One may recall a striking example of this in the description of the orgy at Rosanette's exotic fancy-dress ball. 'La Sphinx', who presumably suffers from tuberculosis:

> ...ne résistant plus au sang qui l'étouffait...porta sa serviette contre ses lèvres, puis la jeta sous la table. (144)

Frédéric tries to be solicitous but she replies -

> - Bah! à quoi bon? autant ça qu'autre chose! La vie n'est pas si drôle!
>
> Alors, il frissonna, pris d'une tristesse glaciale, comme s'il avait aperçu des mondes entiers de misère... et les cadavres de la Morgue en tablier de cuir... (145)

This gruesome episode in the midst of gaiety and luxury and the associations it has for Frédéric is, in fact, Flaubert's own vision of the fatality and inconstancy of life, conditioned, most probably, by his medical background and perhaps an inborn taste for the morbid. The concept of life in a state of constant flux is one we shall return to later in the study of Virginia Woolf.

SMELL

Smell seems to be one of the sense-impressions that Flaubert was least aware of and which contributes less to the images and atmospheres he creates than the others. This may be due to the fact that he produces a series of visual images combining the sense-impressions of texture, light and movement while his interest in sound and the lack of it helps to evoke atmosphere and inner psychological states. Smell, in the form of the natural scent of flowers, ladies' perfumes and smells associated with the city and with domestic life, play a secondary role, merely adding to the pervading atmosphere and in some cases carrying erotic connotations.

Flaubert's predilection for visual images is borne out by the fact that although so many rich feasts are described in L'Éducation sentimentale, the smells of the different delicacies are not mentioned even once. In other works of his we do find occasionally some allusion to the pleasant odour of food: for instance, at the ball at la Vaubyessard in Madame Bovary, where it is mingled with other scents:

> Emma se sentit, en entrant, enveloppée par un air chaud, mélange du parfum des fleurs en du beau linge, du fumet des viandes et de l'odeur des truffes. (57)

Even where a most exotic feast is described in detail, at the beginning of Salammbô, the odours are only suggested quite vaguely in:

> La fumée des viandes montait dans les feuillages avec la vapeur des haleines. (54)

For the purposes of this analysis, I have divided the subject into sub-sections according to types of smell, rather then smell combined with other sense-impressions, as in previous sections. Smell associated with texture and sound have already been examined in the relative sections.[1]

The present subject seems to fall naturally into the following categories:

1. Smell and imagery
2. Smell in its literal sense
   - (i) Natural scents associated usually with flowers and the countryside,
   - (ii) Artificial perfumes with their sophisticated and erotic associations,
   - (iii) Smells connected with city and domestic life,
   - (iv) Any example linked to special circumstances which does not come into any of these categories.

Temperature seems to accompany smell in several instances - in the form of warm winds, freshness, cold and suffocating heat. Imagery in connection with smell scarcely seems to occur at all. There are two short passages which we may note here before examining the various categories where the sense of smell appears in a literal sense.

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1. Cf. ES : pp. 38, 74, 152, 279, 281.
   S : p.88.

1. Smell and imagery

The infatuation Frédéric feels for Mme. Arnoux is likened to the use of a strong perfume:

> La contemplation de cette femme l'énervait, comme l'usage d'un parfum trop fort...et devenait presque une manière générale de sentir, un mode nouveau d'existence (86)

Perfume is also equated with exotic happiness in Madame Bovary, when Emma and Léon begin to feel for each other:

> Les bonheurs futurs, comme les rivages des tropiques, projettent sur l'immensité... une brise parfumée, et l'on s'assoupit dans cet environnement, sans même s'inquiéter de l'horizon que l'on n'aperçoit pas. (MB 114)

A sense of the infinite is implied in the allusion to 'l'immensité' and the horizon which cannot be seen.

2. Smell in its literal sense

(i) Natural smells

Most frequently these are associated with the scent of flowers or leaves as people walk or travel through the countryside; they have lyrical and romantic connotations.

As Frédéric and Deslauriers walk on summer evenings in Nogent:

> Les soirs d'été, quand ils avaient marché longtemps par les chemins pierreux au bord des vignes, ou sur la grande route en pleine campagne, et que les blés ondulaient au soleil, tandis que des senteurs d'angélique passaient dans l'air, une sorte d'étouffement les prenait, et ils s'étendaient sur le dos, étourdis, énivrés. (31)

The effect of the warm summer evening air, full of the scent of angelica, and the swaying movement of the corn in the sun, produces a sense of intoxication in these two young men as they walk and discuss in youthful enthusiasm.

Flower perfumes pervading the night air and intensifying Frédéric's state of bliss can be noted when M. and Mme. Arnoux and their sleeping child travel back to Paris with him through the night:

> La voiture roulait, et les chèvrefeuilles et les seringas débordaient les clôtures des jardins, envoyaient dans la nuit des bouffées d'odeurs amollissantes. (104)

The particular use of 'bouffée' in this context to express strong, sweet scent being wafted at intervals, is reminiscent of Flaubert's use of 'touffes' to convey the impression of a thick clump of flower-heads or green plants.[1]

A comparable use of 'bouffée' can be seen when Louise Roque and Frédéric sit romantically by the riverside at Nogent:

> ... et le vent chaud...leur apportait par bouffées des senteurs de lavande, avec le parfum du goudron s'échappant d'une barque... (275)

It reminds us of Flaubert's sensitivity to a variety of opposite kinds of sound and movement proceeding at the same time, and his consciousness of regularities and irregularities in surfaces.[2] Here we note a strange juxtaposition of opposite types of smell - lavender and tar - producing a sense of reality rather than the lyrical or ideal.[3] Warmth also contributes to the intensity of these aromas.

The combination of freshness and flower-scents has a calming effect on Frédéric as he sits with Rosanette at the 'Café Anglais' after the races:

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1. Cf. comment on passage from ES 281, supra, p. 114

2. For discussion of 'inégalité', refer to section on this subject, pp. 204-211.

3. Cf. Salammbô, p.2.

> De larges moires frissonnaient sur l'asphalte qui séchait, et un magnolia posé au bord du balcon embaumait l'appartement. Ce parfum et cette fraîcheur détendirent ses nerfs; (232)

Temperature here is coupled with scent, as in the previous passage. The light shimmering in the puddles on the pavement is expressed metaphorically in the concept of watered-silk:

> De larges moires frissonnaient.[1]

Frédéric experiences complete happiness with Mme. Arnoux at her country home at Auteuil; even the characteristic damp smells of autumn contribute to their joy. In the summer-house:

> ...les murailles exhalaient une odeur de moisi; (296)

and

> Ils jouissaient délicieusement de la senteur des feuilles humides, (297)

In their state of heightened perceptiveness, all these details add to their sense of feeling at one with nature.

Fresh natural scents associated with girls and young women can be found in the description of Mme. Arnoux's daughter Marthe. Frédéric meets her on his first visit to the Arnoux household:

> Ses cheveux bruns descendaient en longs anneaux frisés sur ses bras nus. Sa robe, plus bouffante que le jupon d'une danseuse, laissait voir ses mollets roses, et toute sa gentille personne sentait frais comme un bouquet. (63)

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1. For further references to 'moire', see section on Light and texture, p.140 and also pp.75-6, note (1).

Similarly, of Rosanette and Frédéric in the forest of Fontainebleau he writes:

> ...quand il se penchait vers elle, la fraîcheur de sa peau se mêlait au grand parfum des bois. (353)

A sense of youth is conveyed in this freshness, and in the latter case, a sense of being in deep harmony with the loveliness of nature. Again, when Emma arrives unexpectedly in Rodolphe's room early one morning, the same air of natural freshness fills Rodolphe's senses:

> ...elle arrivait essoufflée, les joues roses, et exhalant de toute sa personne un frais parfum de sève, de verdure et de grand air. (MB 193)

The sense of smell in these three instances stresses Frédéric's and Rodolphe's perceptivity while at the same time it helps to characterize the three young women in their fresh beauty.

(ii) Artificial perfumes

Perfumes of all kinds bear connotations of the sophisticated and sometimes of the erotic and are also a form of characterisation. For instance, at Rosanette's fancy-dress ball where Frédéric:

> ... resta debout à contempler les quadrilles... - et humant les molles senteurs de femmes, qui circulaient comme un immense baiser épandu. (138)

This recalls a similar image at Mme. Dambreuse's party,

> ... un courant d'air parfumé circulait sous le battement des éventails (182)[1]

The pages of a letter sent by Rosanette to Frédéric:

> ...sentaient l'iris; et il y avait, dans la forme des caractères et l'espacement irrégulier des lignes, comme un désordre de toilette qui le troubla (224)

The perfume of the notepaper and the untidy handwriting carry feminine and erotic connotations, just as Rodolphe's casual style of dressing suggests a life of romantic adventure and unconventionality to the common observer.[2]

Mme. Dambreuse's sophisticated and refined charm is reflected in the kind of perfume she uses:

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1. Cf. section on Movement, p. 186.

2. See MB 163.

> ...le moindre de ses sourires faisait rêver; son charme enfin, comme l'exquise odeur qu'elle portait ordinairement, était complexe et indéfinissable. (389)

After her husband's death, Mme. Dambreuse goes up to her room, where Frédéric joins her:

> On y sentait une odeur indéfinissable, émanation des choses délicates qui l'emplissaient. (403)

The same atmosphere of femininity and subtlety pervades the room. Flaubert's particular use of 'indéfinissable' in this context does not have its normal connotations of vagueness but suggests the idea of something so complex that there is no possible way of defining it. The word is being associated here with 'indéfini' and other derivations of 'infini'.[1]

Perfumes associated with men's sophisticated dress can also be noted, but more particularly in Madame Bovary. At the ball at La Vaubyessard, Emma notices how the gentlemen:

> ...s'essuyaient les lèvres à des mouchoirs brodés d'un large chiffre, d'où sortait une odeur suave. (MB 60)

And in one of the early meetings with Rodolphe she is intoxicated by the perfume of his hair, which reminds her of the vicomte at the ball:

> ...dont la barbe exhalait, comme ces cheveux-là, cette odeur de vanille et de citron. (MB 173)

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1. For further references see supra, p.156 note (1).

Léon, before meeting Emma in the Rouen cathedral, also perfumes his handkerchief:

> Il...répandit dans son mouchoir tout ce qu'il possédait de senteurs. (MB 283)[1]

It is interesting to observe that perfumes worn by men are mentioned in Madame Bovary rather than in L'Éducation sentimentale, possibly because the sense-experiences in Madame Bovary are revealed to us largely from Emma's point of view and it is the sophisticated and even seductive qualities in men's perfumes that attract her.

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1. For more detailed discussion of the quotation see section on Dubliners. pp. 255-6.

(iii) City and domestic smells

Smells, agreable and disagreable, connected with city life and domestic scenes, help to create atmosphere and emphasise certain psychological states. The depression Frédéric feels in his lodgings is intensified by the concierge who appears each morning... 'en sentant l'alcool et en grommelant.' (39). The same sense of distaste and loneliness emerges pungently from the stale smells of food, drink and tobacco in the restaurant that Frédéric frequents:

> ... une odeur de cuisine, de quinquet et de tabac emplissait la salle déserte. (41)

In his state of infatuation for Mme. Arnoux, on the other hand, the damp smell of the fog and the aromas emanating from cafés become deliciously agreable:

> ... le temps était froid, et un lourd brouillard,..puait dans l'air. Frédéric le humait avec délices, (86)

This is when he accompanies Mme. Arnoux to the shops. When he wanders idly along the boulevards:

> ... des tombereaux d'arrosage versaient une pluie sur la poussière, et une fraîcheur inattendue se mêlait aux émanations des cafés. (107)

As in the passages on natural scents,[1] temperature is coupled with odour - in this instance a cool freshness mingles with the aroma of the cafés.

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1. Cf. supra, p.216, (ES 275) and p.217, (ES 232).

Another category of smells includes those associated with certain occupations, intensifying the significance of the scene in each case. At the factory at Creil:

> ... un poêle de fonte exhalait une température écoeurante, où se mêlait l'odeur de la térébenthine. (220)

The unexpected phrase, 'une température écoeurante' being exhaled from the stove is doubly expressive, combining the notion of both heat and a sickening odour. It is a little reminiscent of James Joyce's allusion to 'the peaceful odour of Mrs Dillon', where two ideas are expressed in one.[1]

In Madame Bovary, at the hairdresser's in Rouen:

> Il faisait chaud,... le poêle bourdonnait au milieu des perruques et des pommades. L'odeur des fers, avec ces mains grasses qui lui maniaient la tête, ne tardait pas à l'étourdir... (MB 315)

The effects of temperature and smell combine to create an oppressive atmosphere.

The odours pervading the bohemian gatherings held at Mlle. Vatnaz's apartment where:

> ...l'odeur âcre de deux lampes se mêlait à l'arôme du chocolat, qui emplissait des bols encombrant la table à jeu. (388)

are a form of characterisation - the pervading atmosphere is one of disorder, eccentricity, free-thinking and homeliness.

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1. Cf. Dubliners, p.16. For more detailed discussion, see p,259 and p.268 note (1)

A city scene, exceptional though it is, in which smell plays a large role, is depicted where Frédéric feels himself caught up in the political upheavals:

> Le magnétisme des foules enthousiastes l'avait pris. Il humait voluptueusement l'air orageux, plein des senteurs de la poudre.... (319)

Smell here is closely associated with the street-fighting - it is the very smell of the gunpowder that appeals to Frédéric. We have, in fact, an example of metonymy.

(iv) Miscellaneous

One example of smell in l'Éducation sentimentale which does not easily fit into any category, but which carries very particular overtones, occurs in the description of Rosanette's new-born son:

> Il...aperçut, au milieu des linges, quelque chose d'un rouge jaunâtre, extrêmement ridé, qui sentait mauvais et vagissait. (413)

This is predominantly a visual image - repulsive to Frédéric but heavenly to Rosanette. The bad smell associated with the child is somehow a premonition of its early and morbid death. Ironically the only positive outcome of all Frédéric's emotional relationships is embodied in this child, who is disgusting to him and who has so short a life.

In general, Flaubert seems to have been aware of pleasant aromas and their emotional overtones rather than the unpleasant. In Madame Bovary, where one would expect allusion to disagreeable odours in connection with the beggar, Hippolyte's gangrened foot and Emma's death, there is no mention of them whatsoever.

PART II

JOYCE

There is a tendency in Joyce to express sensory experience through a synthesis of sense-impressions. It is virtually impossible to separate these and break them down into different components, as was more possible with Flaubert. For the purpose of this analysis, therefore, I have, in the main, divided the sense-impressions into categories according to which one I feel to be predominant, and have analysed it in conjunction with the subsidiary ones.

For example, the following extract from A Portrait of the Artist under the heading of Heat and Cold:

> The evening air was pale and chilly and after every charge and thud of the footballers, the greasy leather orb flew like a heavy bird through the grey light. (PAYM 8)

The whole passage is a building-up of one sense-impression upon another, the principal one being the sense of cold that first strikes the boy, accompanied by that of sound, texture, movement and light. The cumulative effect is to crystallise a moment in the boy's experience.

I have treated Dubliners and A Portrait separately as the literary form of the short story and of the novel are not strictly comparable.

DUBLINERS

The sections have been divided as follows:-

1. Light
2. Sound
3. Smell

1. LIGHT

In Joyce's work, light is very rarely described without being accompanied by other sense impressions, such as smell, temperature, sound, or in contrast with darkness. Street scenes illuminated by lamplight, or warm summer days bathed in sunshine, interiors lit by candles or gaslight, rays of light falling on women's skin, hair or clothing, and light equated with fire, metaphorically, to express life and human passions - these are themes running through Dubliners. Suffering as he did from poor eyesight, Joyce's references to light are not as frequent or as striking as in Flaubert's work where infinite variations in different qualities of moving light contribute so much to the beauty of his writing. The effects of light which Joyce alludes to tend to be rather points or shafts of light from street lamps and lit windows in scenes which are predominantly dull and dark.

The difference in awareness of light in these two writers is borne out in the passages quoted below, both descriptions of street scenes. We may examine them before starting on the main part of the analysis.

At the beginning of 'Two Gallants':

> The grey warm evening of August had descended upon the city and a mild warm air, a memory of summer, circulated in the streets. The streets, shuttered for the repose of Sunday, swarmed with a gaily coloured crowd. Like illuminated pearls the lamps shone from the summits of their tall poles upon the living texture below which, changing shape and hue unceasingly, sent up into the warm grey evening air an unchanging, unceasing murmur. (D 45)

Frédéric, as he walks round the streets in the afternoon:

> Après de sombres ruelles.... il arrivait sur de grandes places désertes, éblouissantes de lumière, et où des monuments dessinaient au bord du pavé des dentelures d'ombre noire.. le dimanche surtout,... c'était un immense flot ondulant sur l'asphalte, au milieu de la poussière, dans une rumeur continue. (ES 84)

Joyce's scene is greyish with spots of light from the lamps, looking like illuminated pearls, while Flaubert's picture is built up from contrasts in different qualities of light and shade - the dark alley-ways, squares dazzling in the sunlight and the silhouetted shadows cast by the tall buildings. What is interesting is the striking similarity in their presentation of the continual movement and noise of the crowds - in the one a 'living texture changing shape and hue unceasingly, sent up...an unchanging, unceasing murmur' and in the other 'un immense flot ondulant....dans une rumeur continue.'

These two extracts are both formed of a synthesis of light, shade, movement and sound, but in Joyce's

we meet another point: the repetition of motifs, almost identical but not quite, very much like a musical theme which returns with slight variations.[1] The passage is introduced by:

> The grey warm evening of August had descended...

followed by:

> ....and a mild warm air...circulated in the streets.

The description finishes with:

> ...the living texture below... sent up into the warm grey evening air an unchanging unceasing murmur.

There is also repetition in his use of 'changing', 'unceasingly', 'unchanging' and 'unceasing'. One is reminded of musical instruments, each with a theme, which, when they play in unison, form a concordant whole. This musical quality in Joyce's writing and the appeal that the sound of words in themselves had for him, is a characteristic which differentiates his style very distinctly from Flaubert's. Language had to be perfectly balanced and melodious for Flaubert, but not by means of repetition or variations on a theme.

Let us consider Joyce's treatment of light in some further descriptions from Dubliners. Here is a

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1. For further references to this feature, see infra p. 293 note (1).

characteristic scene as night is falling, where a synthesis of sense-impressions creates a particular atmosphere and catches in words a moment in human lives. It is from 'Araby', when children meet in the streets at dusk to play. The light from the street-lamps and the kitchen windows contrasts sharply with the darkness of the lanes, gardens and stables which they pass during their games:

> The space of sky above us was the colour of ever-changing violet and towards it the lamps of the street lifted their feeble lanterns. The cold air stung us and we played till our bodies glowed. Our shouts echoed in the silent street. The career of our play brought us through the dark muddy lanes behind the houses..., to the back doors of the dark dripping gardens where odours arose from the ashpits, to the dark odorous stables where a coachman....shook music from the buckled harness. When we returned to the street light from the kitchen windows had filled the areas. (D 25)

The personification of the lamps which 'lifted their feeble lanterns' towards the sky and the peculiar use of 'feeble' in this context gives an image of delicate iron lamp posts supporting faint lights - faint because artificial light cannot easily be distinguished in the twilight. This very individual way of expressing an impression shows us something about Joyce's own sensitivity - both to what he observes and to the connotations of the words he uses. It is the poet's rather than the prose-writer's art. The personification

in 'lifted' is reminiscent of another evening scene - in 'After the Race' where Jimmy and his friend walk towards home:

> ...while the city hung its pale globes of light above them in a haze of summer evening (D 40)

There are two qualities of light here - the artificial light and the soft summer twilight and it is as if the city itself is instrumental in lighting the lamps.

In the passage from 'Araby', there is allusion to temperature in the contrast of the sharp coldness of the evening with the warm glow the children feel after their energetic games. The prevailing silence is emphasised by their echoing voices and darkness is contrasted with light by repetition of the word 'dark' in the 'dark muddy lanes', 'dark dripping gardens' and 'dark odorous stables'.

The sense of smell also contributes to the scene in the smells issuing from the ashpits and stables. The unpleasant yet familiar and reassuring aromas associated with gardens are reminiscent of Stephen's walk home when:

> The faint sour stink of rotted cabbages came towards him from the kitchen gardens.... (PAYM 165)

He welcomes it, symbolic as it is of the 'disorder, the misrule and confusion of his father's house'. For him this stagnant vegetation is affirmation of life as opposed to the negative asceticism of the Jesuit order.

The image conveyed in 'dripping gardens' with its connotations of damp, sound and freshness is repeated in A Portrait when Stephen walks to his University classes in the early morning:

> ...he...felt the grey morning light falling about him through the dripping trees and smelt the strange wild smell of wet leaves and bark (PAYM 179)

The smells in this instance are connected with the freshness of growing vegetation.

Following on, in 'Araby', a similar scene of light and dark, sound and silence, set against a background of rain, is described when the young boy goes into the room where the priest had died:

> It was a dark rainy evening and there was no sound in the house. Through one of the broken panes I heard the rain impinge upon the earth, the fine incessant needles of water playing in the sodden beds. Some distant lamp or lighted window gleamed below me. I was thankful that I could see so little. (D 26)

The darkness, silence and sound of the rain are welcome to him, as if they isolated him from the rest of the world so that he could nurture his love for Mangan's sister alone. The distant gleam of light is not necessary to him. A wonderful synthesis of sense-impressions is built up with the darkness and the faint light, the silent house and the imagery of 'the fine incessant needles of water playing in the sodden beds.' This is primarily a visual image, with the strange use

of 'incessant' to emphasise the fast-driving quality of the rain expressed in 'needles of water'.

There is a later scene when night has already fallen. Light - or rather the lack of it - symbolises the young boy's hopelessness, disappointment and rage when he finds the bazaar is over. He cannot buy a present for the girl he loves. A few isolated sounds emphasise the general silence:

> Nearly all the stalls were closed and the greater part of the hall was in darkness. I recognised a silence like that which pervades a church after a service...two men were counting money on a salver. I listened to the fall of the coins...I heard a voice call from the one end of the gallery that the light was out. The upper part of the hall was now completely dark.
>
> Gazing up into the darkness I saw myself as a creature derided by vanity; and my eyes burned with anguish and anger.
>
> (D 30-1)

Darkness symbolises everything that is negative for this young boy. The sense that the bazaar, previously full of people and voices, was now a complete vacuum is conveyed clearly by 'a silence like that which pervades a church after a service'. This simile is one that we might expect in such a context, for he has unwittingly come to a church bazaar. The magic name 'Araby' had led him to believe he was going somewhere far more exotic. In general, Joyce's use of simile is not particularly striking. In A Portrait, Stephen listens to the birds' cries which are:

> ...like the squeak of mice behind
> the wainscot: a shrill twofold note.
> (PAYM 228)

When he senses the moment of inspiration as the day dawns:

> The instant flashed forth like a
> point of light... (PAYM 221)

These are familiar and recognised concepts. If we compare his use with Flaubert's, we find that the images Flaubert uses in his similes are also quite conventional at times. For example, in describing Frédéric's visions of success:

> Ces images fulguraient, comme des
> phares, à l'horizon de sa vie. (ES 105)

This is, in fact, quite comparable with Stephen's moment of inspiration. However, Flaubert also finds a number of most original images, likening objects in nature to articles associated with women's clothing and elegant society,[1] as in the description of Pellerin's studio where:

> ... la poussière amassée faisait
> comme des lambeaux de velours, (ES 73),

or the smoke from an engine's funnel:

> ... allongeait horizontalement,....
> comme une gigantesque plume d'autruche...
> (ES 415)

to mention only two examples.

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1. For further references, see supra p. 102 note (1).

Night is over and it is the early hours of the morning when Gabriel and Gretta finally take leave of the Misses Morkans in 'The Dead'. The effects of faint early light, the dark sky and the reddish light of the street lamps convey something ominous rather than lyrical or romantic. They foreshadow in fact the revelation of Gretta's past love for the young Michael Finney who had died:

> The morning was still dark. A dull yellow light brooded over the houses and the river; and the sky seemed to be descending. It was slushy underfoot, and only streaks and patches of snow lay on the roofs, on the parapets of the quay and on the area railings. The lamps were still burning redly in the murky air and, across the river, the palace of the Four Courts stood out menacingly against the heavy sky. (D 191)

The metaphorical use of 'brooded' in connection with the dull morning light, or 'menacingly' relating to the way the palace stood out 'against the heavy sky' which 'seemed to be descending' all convey a sense of oppressiveness. A clear visual image is created and one is reminded of the small scenes of the Thames painted by Paul Maitland (1863-1909) in which the greyish pinkish tones of the colour convey an atmosphere of mist or early morning, with the mass of heavy buildings in the background. Joyce's scenes are predominantly grey with touches of faint light and the motif of 'grey light' and 'grey air' is one we shall refer

to in more detail in the analysis of A Portrait.

Light associated with the warmth of public-houses and the shining red face of the habitual drinker is described in 'Counterparts'. Mr. Farrington escapes from his duties at the office and

> ... filling up the little window that looked into the bar with his inflamed face, the colour of dark wine or dark meat, he called out:
>
> Here, Pat, give us a g.p., like a good fellow. (D 81)

The light, warmth and noise of the bar is infinitely attractive to him, and having returned furtively through the dark streets, he tries absent-mindedly to deal with his work:

> The dark damp night was coming and he longed to spend it in the bars, drinking with his friends amid the glare of gas and the clatter of glasses..... (D 81)

And again a little later,

> ... his head was not clear and his mind wandered away to the glare and rattle of the public-house. (D 82)

The brilliant gaslight and the noise of the public-house in contrast to the depressing dark evening were synonymous in his mind with all that was pleasant in life - as he says, 'It was a night for hot punches'. The contrasted effects of light and dark, accompanied by sound, help to characterise his state of mind and his surroundings. Later the image is extended to include the sense of smell also. Having pawned his

watch-chain for six shillings he was making his way to Davy Byrne's

> and his nose already sniffed the curling fumes of punch. (D 84)

The effects of bright light on female figures, emphasising sensuous qualities in complexion, naked skin, glossy hair or articles of clothing is a striking motif of Joyce's. The whiteness of girls' and women's skin seems to have been something that struck and attracted him particularly. In 'Araby' while Mangan's sister talks with the young boy for the first time:

> Her brother and the other boys were fighting for their caps and I was alone at the railings. She held one of the spikes, bowing her head towards me. The light from the lamp opposite our door caught the white curve of her neck, lit up her hair and rested there and, falling, lit up the hand upon the railing. It fell over the side of her dress and caught the white border of a petticoat visible as she stood at ease. (D 27)

The same image of light and dark is repeated later as he stood at the window watching her house:

> ...I looked over at the dark house where she lived. I may have stood there for an hour, seeing nothing but the brown-clad figure cast by my imagination, touched discreetly by the lamplight at the curved neck, at the hand upon the railings and at the border below the dress. (D 29)

The light, with the fluid characteristics of water, falls from her neck to her hair and from her hand to the border of her white petticoat. The progression from head to foot is reminiscent of an eye travelling downwards, struck by whatever is essentially feminine and provocative. 'The white curve of her neck' creates a sensuous image like that of a swan.

Comparing young girls with birds with their soft plumage and light movements is a characteristic of Joyce's style that we find repeated in A Portrait when Stephen sees a young girl paddling by the sea-shore:

> A girl stood before him in mid-stream, alone and still, gazing out to sea. She seemed like one whom magic had changed into the likeness of a strange and beautiful seabird....Her thighs, fuller and softhued as ivory, were bared almost to the hips, where the white fringes of her drawers were like feathering of soft white down... Her bosom was as a bird's, soft and slight, slight and soft as the breast of some dark-plumaged dove... (PAYM 175)

Stephen's eye is caught by the whiteness of her skin and the white fringe of her drawers, as ~~was~~ the narrator in 'Araby' was attracted by the girl's white neck and hand and the border of her white petticoat.

There is a further point of interest here. As in the reference to the odours of gardens and stables (D 25) and the parallel in A Portrait (p.165) where the literal description comes to have symbolic connotations, so with the young girl and her soft, sensuous bird-like

characteristics, Joyce again develops the theme from the literal to the symbolic. This girl too becomes a symbol of Stephen's affirmation of life and love and the realisation of his vocation:

> Her image had passed into his soul for ever and no word had broken the holy silence of his ecstasy. Her eyes had called him and his soul had leapt at the call. To live, to err, to fall, to triumph, to recreate life out of life! (PAYM 176)

A more mature woman, Gretta, is described in 'The Dead' in terms of light and darkness. Her husband Gabriel notices her figure silhouetted against the shadows as he gazes up the staircase. Her stillness and the sounds of the gay party in the background help to create a total image, which is a visual one:

> He could not see her face but he could see the terracotta and salmon pink panels of her skirt which the shadow made appear black and white. It was his wife... Gabriel was surprised at her stillness... he could hear little save the noise of laughter and dispute on the front steps, a few chords struck on the piano and a few notes of a man's voice singing... (D 188)

He stands in the dark hall, still watching her and thinking that:

> If he were a painter, he would paint her in that attitude. Her blue felt hat would show off the bronze of her hair against the darkness and the dark panels of her skirt would show off the light ones. (D 188)

A little later, as they stand ready to leave, the motif of her bronze hair is repeated, lit up on this occasion by the gas lamp:

> She was standing right under the dusty fan-light and the flame of the gas lit up the rich bronze of her hair which he had seen her drying at the fire a few days before...At last she turned towards them and Gabriel saw that there was colour on her cheeks and that her eyes were shining. A sudden tide of joy went leaping out of his heart. (D 190)

In these three quotations one can observe a general progression, like a musical theme, developing, repeating itself and changing slightly, moving towards a climax which is different but still related.[1] The effects of light and shade are seen first in terms of contrast in the panels of Gretta's dress as she stands against the shadows. This is then repeated, but added to it are the colour and texture of her blue felt hat and the bronze colour of her hair with its connotations of warmth and glossiness. The final passage takes the motif of the hair shining in the gaslight and develops the image by alluding to the fire by which she had dried it some days previously. The notion of the literal warmth of the fire opens out into the sudden fiery emotion awoken in Gabriel at the

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1. For further references to this feature see infra p. 293 note (1).

sight of her flushed cheeks and shining eyes.

The process of flash-backs - moments in years gone by or in past relationships that suddenly appear in the mind's eye with clear immediacy - is often expressed by Joyce through a series of sense-impressions. For instance, when Gretta proceeds with Mr. Bartell D'Arcy along the slushy streets as they leave the party, Gabriel watches her, remembering moments of ecstasy in their past life together. Joyce equates those disconnected moments with the brilliance of stars and a complete synthesis of light, sound, temperature and smell builds up the total effect:

> Moments of their secret life together burst like stars upon his memory.... Birds were twittering in the ivy and the sunny web of the curtain was shimmering along the floor: he could not eat for happiness. They were standing on the crowded platform and he was placing a ticket inside the warm palm of her glove. He was standing with her in the cold, looking in through a grated window at a man making bottles in a roaring furnace. It was very cold, Her face, fragrant in the cold air, was quite close to his;... (D 191)

The impression is one of sunlight, bird-song, the cold outside, the warmth of Gretta's palm, the roaring heat of the furnace and the fragrance of her skin. A moment has been caught and crystallized through the cumulative effect of sense-impressions.

The motif of stars and fire equated with human passion is repeated:

> Like the tender fires of stars moments of their life together, that no one knew of or would ever know of, broke upon and illumined his memory... For the years, he felt, had not quenched...all their souls' tender fire. (D 191-2)

Like a musical theme with slight variations, the motif of stars is taken up again, this time in conjunction with 'tender fires'. The unexpected use of the epithet 'tender' in this context implies a gentle love which is spiritual as well as physical. The concept is repeated in 'their souls' tender fire'.

Besides using the images of fire and stars to express, metaphorically, the sudden awakening of passion, Joyce also introduces water-imagery. Water naturally conveys a sense of movement:

> A wave of yet more tender joy escaped from his heart and went coursing in warm flood along his arteries. (D 191)

This is a repetition of a previous motif, with slight variations. When Gabriel notices the colour in Gretta's cheeks,

> A sudden tide of joy went leaping out of his heart (D 190)

Movement is expressed metaphorically by the mention of the sea and, literally, in 'escaped from his heart' and

'went leaping out of his heart'. Equating love with water and the waves of the sea is a familiar motif in Flaubert too.[1]

A very different type of description, characterised by light and shade and dots of colour may be noted in the church scene in 'Grace', where the gentlemen gather, dressed in their best dark suits. The general sombre effect of the scene is alleviated by the white of their collars and various spots of light:

> The light of the lamps of the church fell upon an assembly of black clothes and white collars, relieved here and there by tweeds, on dark mottled pillars of green marble... The gentlemen sat in the benches, having hitched their trousers slightly above their knees and laid their hats in security. They sat well back and gazed formally at the distant speck of red light which was suspended before the high altar. (D 157)

One is reminded of similar gatherings in L'Éducation sentimentale where men's dark suits are dotted with odd patches of bright colour - for example, at the Dambreuse's home:

> La foule des hommes qui...faisait de loin une seule masse noire, où les rubans des boutonnières mettaient des points rouges ça et là, et que rendait plus sombre la monotone blancheur des cravates. (ES 178)

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1. Cf. supra, p. 198 , ES 68, ES 210, ES 413, MB 314.

If we take these two descriptions as they stand, they are both group-scenes without reference to individuals. Flaubert presents a completely generalised impression of men's formal evening wear, and even if we refer to the text where he goes on to describe the company in further detail, we see types rather than individuals. Joyce's church scene, though presented in terms of light and dark, includes touches that bring these solemn Irishmen to life - the attention they pay to their trousers and hats, the fact that they 'sat well back', making themselves at ease, and 'gazed formally' at the light before the altar. Joyce's use of 'formally' in this context is a poetic one,[1] suggesting the phlegmatic, unquestioning way in which they attend Mass.

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1. Cf. other references to Joyce's poetic use of language, p. 268 note (1).

2. SOUND

Joyce's consciousness of sound appears in Dubliners in a variety of ways: in the heightened awareness of sound in the characters he creates, in a synthesis of sound, silence, and even light and movement on occasions, and in the musical quality inherent in his writing. This he produces by returning to themes which he varies slightly, by the use of alliteration and by repetition of individual words and phrases.

In the young boy in 'Araby', who is violently in love and hyper-sensitive to all kinds of sense-impressions, we find an emotional state rather similar to Frédéric's at the beginning of L'Éducation sentimentale. Both these young people, infatuated with a person virtually unknown to them, are abnormally sensitive to everything around them - their vision is coloured by their emotions. As the boy says of Mangan's sister, the object of his love:

> Her image accompanied me even in places most hostile to romance. On Saturday evenings when my aunt went marketing I had to carry some of the parcels. We walked through the flaring streets, jostled by drunken men and bargaining women, amid the curses of labourers, the shrill litanies of shop-boys... the nasal chanting of street-singers....These noises converged in a single sensation of life for me...(D 26)

There is an interesting parallel in L'Éducation sentimentale, when Frédéric feels that everything surrounding him converges on Mme. Arnoux and the noise of the city is as music dedicated to her:

> ...toutes les rues conduisaient vers sa maison: les voitures ne stationnaient sur les places que pour y mener plus vite; Paris se rapportait à sa personne, et la grande ville avec toutes ses voix, bruissait, comme un immense orchestre, autour d'elle. (ES 87)

Here the young man feels the city exists only in so far as it is related to the woman he loves; for the young boy, the market, the noise and his love create a synthesis which for him is life itself. If we compare the way the two authors have treated this subject, we find a striking difference. Joyce's is a sharper, more detailed portrayal of a rather squalid scene in a Dublin market, characterised by the voices of local salesmen and workers. The 'shrill litanies' of the shop-boys and the 'nasal chanting' of the street-singers are wonderfully evocative expressions to suggest the monotonous, repetitive form of their song. Flaubert's description presents an all-embracing, rather romanticised image of the sound of Paris playing 'comme un immense orchestre autour d'elle'.

The expectancy and apprehension of the young narrator in 'Araby' are revealed through his extreme sensitivity to sound as he listens to his uncle's movements on returning home. The boy had been waiting all evening to have a little money to spend at the bazaar:

> At nine o'clock I heard my uncle's latchkey in the hall-door. I heard him talking to himself and heard the hall-stand rocking when it had received the weight of his overcoat. I could interpret these signs (D 29)

Repetition of 'heard' emphasises the impression of the boy following minutely and with anxiety, the details of each sound as he waits impatiently for the moment to make his request.

In Joyce's story, 'The Dead', Gabriel's awareness of sound while the couples are dancing, brings the scene before our eyes and also gives us insight into Gabriel's state of mind. He too is feeling apprehensive before the time comes to deliver his annual speech:

> He waited outside the drawing-room door until the waltz should finish, listening to the skirts that swept against it and to the shuffling of feet... The indelicate clacking of the men's heels and the shuffling of their soles reminded him that their grade of culture differed from his. (D 163)

He appears as an outsider, detached from the gaiety of the party, conscious only of certain sounds. The reference to the way the men dance is an indirect means of characterising both the dancers and Gabriel himself. He and they have a different social background and presumably are of different social standing.

When the time eventually comes for him to give the speech, there is a silence, broken by various kinds of sound as the guests prepare to listen:

> Gradually as the last glasses were being filled the conversation ceased. A pause followed, broken only by the noise of the wine and by unsettlings of chairs....Some one coughed once or twice and then a few gentlemen patted the table gently as a signal for silence. The silence came and Gabriel pushed back his chair and stood up.

Continued...

> The patting at once grew louder in encouragement and then ceased altogether ....The piano was playing a waltz tune and he could hear the skirts sweeping against the drawing-room door. People, perhaps, were standing in the snow on the quay outside, gazing up at the lighted windows and listening to the waltz music. The air was pure there. In the distance lay the park where the trees were weighted with snow. The Wellington Monument wore a gleaming cap of snow that flashed westward over the white field of Fifteen Acres. (D 181-2)

Moments of silence and waves of different kinds of sound, characteristic of a formal dinner-party, convey the atmosphere of anticipation. The moment has come to speak but Gabriel's mind is far removed from the supper-table. The dance music within the house evokes a train of thought which in turn creates a series of images - a synthesis of light, sound and whiteness in the world he imagines outside. The gaiety, warmth, noise and sophistication of the party appear in sharp contrast to the still, cold, white shining purity of the snowy scene. The Wellington Monument gains stature through personification and the metaphorical use of 'gleaming' and 'flashed' relating to the 'cap of snow', as if it were a beacon illuminating the surrounding whiteness.

This synthesis serves a double purpose: that of describing the snowy scene outside and of indicating Gabriel's particular sensitivity to the purity and beauty of the natural world in antithesis to the demands made on him by conventional society, culture and sophistication. At a previous point in the story, while Mrs. Malins is

relating tediously the fishing experiences of her son-in-law, an almost identical description is given of the snow outside, introduced, in this instance, by allusion to warmth and cold. Repetition of an identical motif in slightly different wording reminds one of a musical theme and its variations.[1]

> Gabriel's warm trembling fingers tapped the cold pane of the window. How cool it must be outside! How pleasant it would be to walk out alone, first along by the river and then through the park! The snow would be lying on the branches of the trees and forming a bright cap on the top of the Wellington Monument. (D 173)

In this instance, it is actually the sensation of the coolness of the window-pane on his warm fingers that produces the train of thought; in the first case, it was the sound of the waltz.

The motif of the tapping on the window-pane is repeated in Gabriel's internal monologue at the close of the story - now it is the snow falling softly that catches his ear, bringing with it a host of associations. Free use is made of repetition and alliteration creating an atmosphere of infinite melancholy in which we feel that life is slowly slipping away and we are entering a world of the spirit. At the same time, there is a sense of the universal as if the snow as it falls embraces 'all the living and the dead':

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1. Cf. p. 293 note (1).

> A few light taps upon the window pane made him turn to the window. It had begun to snow again. He watched sleepily the flakes, silver and dark, falling obliquely against the lamplight. The time had come for him to set out on his journey westward. Yes, the newspapers were right: snow was general all over Ireland. It was falling on every part of the dark central plain, on the treeless hills, falling softly upon the Bog of Allen and, further westward, softly falling into the dark mutinous Shannon waves. It was falling, too upon every part of the lonely churchyard on the hill where Michael Furey lay buried. It lay thickly drifted on the crooked crosses and headstones, on the spears of the little gate, on the barren thorns. His soul swooned slowly as he heard the snow falling faintly through the universe and faintly falling, like the descent of their last end, upon all the living and the dead. (D 200-1)

There are effects of light and dark in the flakes as some are caught in the lamplight, in the white snow on the 'dark central plains' and the white flakes as they fall into the dark Shannon sea. The white of the snow also shows in relief the objects in the churchyard. 'Falling' is used repeatedly in varying forms - 'falling obliquely', 'falling softly', 'softly falling', 'falling faintly' and 'faintly falling', which sound as gentle music, coupled with the effects of frequent alliteration with the 'f' and 's' sounds in the passage generally.

The concept of the 'soul swooning' is repeated in A Portrait and also in other works of Joyce's.[1]

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1. See Introduction, pp. 62-3

3. SMELL

Smell is one of the sense-impressions of which Joyce seems to have been most acutely aware. In his work, it is often closely associated with temperature - warmth or cold in the outside atmosphere or warmth as a human quality. Perfumes and various aromas, ranging from fresh fragrance to pungent odours, characterise different types of girls or women. Various aromas in the description of male characters convey ideas of sophistication.

Scents associated with the charm and attraction of women appear in several of the stories in Dubliners. In 'The Boarding House', Mr. Doran remembers the night Polly had been all too ready to offer herself to him:

> It was her bath night. She wore a loose open combing-jacket of printed flannel. Her white instep shone in the opening of her furry slippers and the blood glowed warmly behind her perfumed skin. From her hands and wrists too as she lit and steadied her candle a faint perfume arose (D 60)

There is, in fact, a synthesis of sense-impressions culminating in the perfume which has impregnated her skin and seems to be given off by her hands and wrists. Light and warmth radiate from her body and there is actual light shed by her candle. The white skin of her instep 'shone', conveying the physical attraction this bare skin had for Mr. Doran as it appeared in the opening of her furry slipper. Is this passage not reminiscent of Rosanette in L'Éducation sentimentale when Frédéric pays her an unexpected visit and she appears in a négligé and open slippers?

> Enfin Rosanette parut, enveloppée dans une sorte de peignoir en mousseline blanche garnie de dentelles, pieds nus dans des babouches. (ES 151)

There are the same details of casual attire, bare feet and textures of materials that have essentially feminine associations: the fur in the first passage and muslin and lace in the latter. The warmth and attractive quality of her rosy skin, expressed by 'the blood glowed warmly behind her perfumed skin' is a motif observed by Léon in Madame Bovary, where it is the firelight that causes Emma's face to glow:

> Le feu l'éclairait en entier, pénétrant... les pores égaux de sa peau blanche.. Une grande couleur rouge passait sur elle,... (MB 95)

Another young lady about whom we are told very little apart from the attractive perfume of her body, is Miss Healey in 'The Mother'. As she stands in front of an elderly newspaper reporter,

> The warmth, fragrance and colour of her body appealed to his senses. He was pleasantly conscious.... that the laughter and fragrance and wilful glances were his tribute. (D 132)

In Joyce's short story 'Counterparts', a strong, characteristic perfume pervades the stairs leading to Mr. Alleyne's, the director's, office, indicating that a certain lady-friend of the director's, Miss Delacour, has been in.:

> On the stairs a moist pungent odour of perfumes saluted his nose: evidently Miss Delacour had come while he was out in O'Neill's. (D81)

The phrase is repeated, followed by details of this middle-aged client:

> The moist pungent perfume lay all the way up to Mr. Alleyne's room. Miss Delacour was a middle-aged woman of Jewish appearance. Mr. Alleyne was said to be sweet on her or on her money...She was sitting beside his desk now in an aroma of perfumes, smoothing the handle of her umbrella and nodding the great black feather in her hat. (D 82)

The repeated reference to pungent perfumes is a means of characterising this flashy rich Jewish woman, presumably attractive, with a heavy Oriental type of beauty, expensively dressed with the 'great black feather in her hat' completing the picture. The image is striking by virtue of being so out of keeping with the severe, drab surroundings where Farrington, his mind on the public-house, is incapable of getting his copying done satisfactorily.

Turning to the characterisation of men by perfumes and aromas, we read how the five gay young men in 'After the Race'

> ..strolled along Stephen's Green in a faint cloud of aromatic smoke. (D 41)[1]

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1. Cf. allusion to Stephen's Green in A Portrait as Stephen makes his way to college (PAYM 187). It is a feature of Joyce's writing that he refers to actual streets in Dublin and the same streets reappear in successive works - as do some of the characters. e.g. both Stephen and his father Simon Dedalus appear again in Ulysses. Though Joyce lived and wrote as an exile on the Continent, in spirit he never left Ireland:

Continued on following page....

while the elderly reporter who was so captivated by

Miss Healey:

> ...held an extinguished cigar in his hand and the aroma of cigar smoke floated near him. (D 132)

The use of 'faint' in this context, to express discreet elegance and 'floated' to describe the slow, gentle movement of the cigar smoke, help to characterise these relatively wealthy and sophisticated gentlemen.

A rather interesting parallel can be drawn between Little Chandler in Joyce's story 'A Little Cloud' and Léon in Madame Bovary. Both paid careful attention to their appearance - their neatly manicured hands are described in particular - and both were in the habit of perfuming their handkerchiefs, Little Chandler regularly, Léon when the occasion called for it. We are told of Little Chandler that

> He took the greatest care of his fair silken hair and moustache and used perfume discreetly on his handkerchief. The half-moons of his nails were perfect....(D 64)

In Rouen, as Léon prepared for the rendez-vous with Emma,

> Il...répandit dans son mouchoir tout ce qu'il possédait de senteurs... (MB 283)

Footnote 1 continued from previous page...

> On a souvent fait remarquer l'extraordinaire attachement de Joyce à sa ville natale. Il n'est pas un seul de ses livres dont l'action se situe ailleurs. C'est à travers les immeubles et les noms des rues de celle-ci, que son enfance se peuple d'images. C'est à travers les formes premières de ce monde enfantin, que sont organisées ses acquisitions futures. M. Butor, Essais sur les Modernes, 'Petite croisière préliminaire à une reconnaissance de l'archipel Joyce', Gallimard, 1971, pp.239-281. See particularly p.268.

Prior to this occasion, when Léon had accompanied Emma on her way to the wet-nurse, she noticed:

> Ses cheveux châtains...plats et bien peignés. Elle remarqua ses ongles, qui étaient plus longs qu'on ne les portait à Yonville. C'était une des grandes occupations du clerc que de les entretenir; (MB 112)

Little Chandler, a quiet, apparently unassuming family man with aspirations to becoming a writer and Léon, a clerk, debonair and celibate, are certainly not superficially comparable, but it is interesting that in both cases, reference to the perfumes they use and the care of their finger-nails and hair is a means of telling us something about their character. What is of even greater interest is the difference in the treatment of these themes in the two authors and it is a subject we shall return to later. Joyce is sensitive to unusual points of detail and, of the two, presents a far sharper visual image, though with extreme economy of language. 'The half-moons of his nails were perfect' conveys so expressively and succinctly their appearance and gives us to understand the meticulous care devoted to their manicure. From this detail we can also imagine the painstaking, punctilious and even slightly vain character of Little Chandler. Léon is described in far more general terms and from the information we are given about the length of his nails and attention given to them, we may gather he was something of a dandy.

In another of Joyce's stories, 'Eveline', the atmosphere in which a young girl's thoughts are moving is

skilfully compounded from a mixture of sound and odour:

> She sat at the window watching the evening invade the avenue. Her head was leaned against the window curtains and in her nostrils was the odour of dusty cretonne. She was tired.
>
> Few people passed. The man out of the last house passed on his way home; she heard his footsteps clacking along the concrete pavement and afterwards crunching on the cinder path before the new red houses. One time there used to be a field in which they used to play....Her father was not so bad then; and besides, her mother was alive.... Everything changes. Now she was going to go away like the others, to leave her home. (D 32)

A melancholy scene is built up round a tired young woman reminiscing on the past, intensified by effects of sound and smell. 'The odour of dusty cretonne' immediately evokes an image of a home - drab, maybe neglected, while the isolated sounds of footsteps both emphasise the emptiness of the scene and also lead on to her train of thought about the past, which turns full circle, bringing her up to the present moment when she plans to escape from the oppressiveness of her home. The onomatopeic effect of footsteps 'clacking' on the concrete and 'crunching' on the cinder path is wonderfully expressive of those qualities of sound.

'The odour of dusty cretonne' is repeated, in a slightly different form, at a later point in the story, accompanied by another sort of sound - a street organ:

> Her time was running out but she continued to sit by the window, leaning her head against the window curtain, inhaling the odour of dusty cretonne. Down far in the avenue she could hear a street organ playing. She knew the air. Strange that it should come that very night to remind her of the promise to her mother,.. to keep the house together....

Continued...

> She remembered the last night of her mother's illness; she was again/the close dark room at the other side of the hall and outside she heard a melancholy air of Italy. The organ-player had been ordered to go away.... (D 35)

A kind of unity within the framework of the story is produced by repetition of the motif of the smell of dusty material, and the Italian melody on the street organ introduces a train of thought, bringing back to her mind the last day of her mother's life when a similar Italian tune had been heard out in the street. Music, with its intimations of nostalgia and its appeal to the senses, is the most evocative of all forms of sound. In 'The Dead', the melody of 'The Lass of Aughrim', sung by Mr. D'Arcy at the party, brings back to Gretta with tremendous force a whole era of her past: Michael Furey, her first love, who had died of consumption and of love for her, used to sing that same song.

There are parallels in Flaubert's work where the evocativeness of music arouses emotion and may even have a symbolic quality. The melancholy of the beggar's playing on board the 'Ville-de-Montereau' foreshadowed the futility of Frédéric's love for Mme. Arnoux, just as the decrepit beggar's song in Madame Bovary was symbolic of Emma's fate.[1]

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1. For more detailed discussion, see supra pp. 142-143.

One aspect of Joyce's style which we shall trace through A Portrait and which shows complete evolvement in Ulysses, can be found occasionally in Dubliners too. It is his very individual use of words, regardless of their conventional meaning or syntactical application, to convey his own reaction to sensory experience. This quality in his writing is at once analytical and suggestive: analytical in that he has examined his own reaction to the particular subject most minutely, and suggestive in that he has used terms which express that reaction as closely as possible with the instrument of language. As an illustration, I quote an example of sensory experience relating to smell, in 'An Encounter': A group of boys, lead by Joe Dillon, are having Indian battles and we are told that:

> His parents went to eight-o'clock mass every morning in Gardiner Street and the peaceful odour of Mrs. Dillon was prevalent in the hall of the house.. (D 16)

'Peaceful', normally associated with character or environment and denoting lack of sound or activity, can hardly apply to odour. By coining the phrase 'peaceful odour', Joyce manages both to characterise Mrs. Dillon and to convey what the young narrator of the story himself feels about her. For him she was a quiet gentle person who stamped her home with her peaceful character, even when she herself was absent.

Another example of this use of an epithet, serving, as it were, a double purpose appears in 'Grace', in the description of Mr. Kernan's sickroom. His wife brings his friends -

> ... up to his bedroom, the air of which was impregnated with a personal odour. (D 144)

'Personal' in this context brings to mind both the rather unsavoury, stale, close atmosphere often associated with a sickroom and also the reaction of the visitors who were met by this odour and must have immediately connected it in their minds with his drinking bouts and the macabre accident at the public-house when:

> Two gentlemen who were in the lavatory at the time tried to lift him up:... his clothes were smeared with the filth and ooze of the floor on which he had lain, face downwards....A thin stream of blood trickled from the corner of his mouth. (D 138)

Joyce's language has a completely individual quality, capable of evoking innumerable scenes charged with emotive associations, which lead to trains of thought in the characters he creates and also in the reader. To take an isolated example from Ulysses - the milk delivered by the old woman to Stephen and his friends at the beginning of the story suggests a series of scenes to Stephen's mind, one of which is the picture of cows being milked:

> They lowed about her whom they knew, dewsilky cattle. (U 20)

The sense-impression is one of texture - it is the smooth, soft skin of the cows that appeals to him, but by coining the word 'dewsilky' he adds to the physical impression the associated one of freshness, damp and stillness of early morning in the meadow at milking time.

A PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS A YOUNG MAN

The sections have been divided as follows:-

1. Heat and cold
2. Light
3. Sound
4. Movement
5. Smell

1. HEAT AND COLD

The work starts with a picture of the young child's vision of the world and his reactions to it, which are essentially sensory. There is a particular sensitivity to various temperatures, often accompanied by an awareness of odour:

> When you wet the bed, first it is warm then it gets cold. His mother put on the oil sheet. That had a queer smell.
> His mother had a nicer smell than his father. She played on the piano the sailor's hornpipe for him to dance. (PAYM 7)

The sense of warmth and cold associates itself in his thoughts with the oilsheet and its peculiar smell. This in turn leads to a train of thought about the characteristic smell of his parents, which reminds him of the dance his mother used to play for him.[1] The sense of warmth and cold, in fact, introduces a series of visual images - the scenes of his early childhood.

Episodes from his school-days return to his mind, again evoked by his sense of heat and cold. It is winter and he imagines how pleasant it would be to lie before the fire:

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1. H.P. Sucksmith, in commenting on the dance played by Stephen's mother and the story told him previously by his father claims that:

   > ... this passage does not convey infant concerns only. In conveying Stephen's early interest in music, rhythm, poetry,story, biography, parents and identity, it also indicates potentiality and possibility, the direction Stephen will travel.

   H.P. Sucksmith, James Joyce: A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, Edward Arnold, 1973, p. 38.

He shivered, as if he had cold slimy water next to his skin. That was mean of Wells to shoulder him into the square ditch because he would not swop his little snuffbox..How cold and slimy the water had been! A fellow had once seen a big rat jump into the scum. Mother was sitting at the fire with Dante waiting for Brigid to bring in the tea. She had her feet on the fender and her jewelly slippers were so hot and they had such a lovely warm smell!
(PAYM 10)

The sensation of coldness is associated in the narrator's mind with the unpleasant contact of 'cold slimy water', which leads back to the occasion when he had been pushed into the ditch and felt the cold slimy texture of the foul water. The image is made the more repulsive by association with the rat. Without any form of transition, his mind moves nostalgically to the warmth of his home fireside - a complete contrast: the warmth, light and intimacy intensified by the smell of his mother's beaded slippers glinting in the firelight as they rest on the fender. The warmth accompanied by smell creates an atmosphere which for the boy represents 'home'; the visual image is clear and striking too.

The motif of the 'cold slimy water' and the rat jumping into it is repeated again in the first section of the story, emphasising the powerful impression it had made on the sensitive young schoolboy. It is the sensory impact that sticks in his mind and this leads to the mental processes which awaken in him a sense of injustice. At a later point, when his thoughts return to the incident, however, there is a reversal of processes. Teased by his

schoolmates, his train of thought leads him to think about Wells who in turn reminds him of the ditch incident:

> It was a mean thing to do; all the fellows said it was. And how cold and slimy the water had been! And a fellow had once seen a big rat jump plop into the scum.
>
> The cold slime of the ditch covered his whole body; and when the bell rang for study and the lines filed out of the playrooms, he felt the cold air of the corridor and staircase inside his clothes. (PAYM 14 - 15)

The sensation of the cold mud on his body is still with him as he becomes conscious of the present moment, filing down the corridor, again feeling cold. Diagramatically one might express the first passage as:

present sensation - memory of past sensation - train of thought - contrasted sense impressions;

and the second: train of thought - memory of past sensation - present sensation.

In the second passage, the onomatopeic effect of the 'plop' of the rat accentuates the disgusting quality of the water. The theme of the rat occurs again in a different context and slightly different form when Stephen wakes one morning with a high temperature:

> ...he felt the prefect's hand on his forehead; and he felt his forehead warm and damp against the prefect's cold damp hand. That was the way a rat felt, slimy and damp and cold... Sleek slimy coats, little little feet tucked up to jump, black slimy eyes to look out of. They could understand how to jump. But the minds of rats could not understand trigonometry. When they were dead they lay on their sides. Their coats dried then. They were only dead things. (PAYM 22)

The prefect's hand feels cold and damp in contrast with his own hot forehead. The texture and cold impact of the hand immediately associates itself with those same qualities in a rat. He has transferred the slimy cold elements of the ditch-water to the rat itself. The slimy texture starts a train of thought: the rats' 'sleek slimy coats' and 'black slimy eyes'. Having considered their various abilities, he notes that their slimy coats dry up once they are dead. As a formula, one could describe the progression from sensation to thought processes as: contrasted sensations of warmth and cold - comparison with associated texture and sense of cold - train of thought including texture.

Stephen's sensitivity to sensations of heat and cold in combination with textures is evident in the scene where Stephen sits in the school-refectory:

> He sat looking at the two prints of butter on his plate but could not eat the damp bread. The table-cloth was damp and limp. But he drank off the hot weak tea which the clumsy scullion, girt with a white apron, poured into his cup. He wondered whether the scullion's apron was damp too or whether all white things were cold and damp. (PAYM 13)

The sensory impact of the damp texture of the bread and the hot tea precede the more commonplace image of the serving-boy in his white apron. The cold effect of the white colour has associations of dampness for him and he wonders if everything white is automatically cold and damp. An object by virtue of its colour, brings Stephen back to his world of sense-impressions. Whiteness with its

connotations of coldness and in some cases, purity and beauty, is a quality that Joyce's characters find infinitely attractive in girls' and women's skin, associated as it is with nakedness and sometimes with the soft plumage of birds.[1]

Feeling his sickness coming on, and hyper-sensitive to the damp cold, the idea of the gas fire being lit and the warmth of his bed comfort Stephen:

> The air in the corridor chilled him too. It was queer and wettish. But soon the gas would be lit and in burning it made a light noise like a little song. (PAYM 11)

Even the soft sound of the gas flame appeals to him. The thought of his bed is still more attractive:

> He shivered and yawned. It would be lovely in bed after the sheets got a bit hot. First they were so cold to get into. He shivered to think how cold they were first. But then they got hot and then he could sleep... It would be lovely in a few minutes. He felt a warm glow creeping up from the cold shivering sheets, warmer and warmer till he felt warm all over, ever so warm, and yet he shivered a little and still wanted to yawn. (PAYM 17)

Repetition of words like 'shiver', 'hot', 'cold' and 'warm' intensify the alternating sensations he describes, as does the imagery in the 'warm glow creeping up from the cold shivering sheets'. The boy's shivering has been transferred to the sheets in a strange kind of personification and the 'warm glow creeping up' brings to mind the

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1. For further references see p. 238 ref. D27
p. 239 ref. PAYM 175
p. 269 ref. PAYM 37

sensation of warmth as it slowly spreads up the body from the toes. 'Glow' with its image of warmth is mentioned later with reference to the sheets themselves:

> He crouched down between the sheets, glad of <u>their tepid glow</u>. (PAYM 21)

As Stephen dreams of his bed, the bell rings for Prayers and the boys file into chapel. The cold strikes him once again, this time combined with the effects of faint light and darkness:

> The bell rang for night prayers... The corridors were darkly lit and the chapel was darkly lit. Soon all would be dark and sleeping. <u>There was cold night air in the chapel</u> and the marbles were the colour the sea was at night...<u>The sea was cold day and night: but it was colder at night</u>. <u>It was cold and dark under the seawall</u> beside his father's house. But the kettle would be on the hob to make punch. (PAYM 17-18)

The expression 'darkly lit', giving the impression of a large dark area faintly illuminated, is reminiscent of other evocative descriptions of Joyce's - for example, the 'peaceful odour' of Mrs. Dillon in <u>Dubliners</u>.[1] Stephen equates the cold dark atmosphere and dark marble in the chapel with the deep colour of the sea at night - the sensory impact of the cold giving rise to a visual image. The thought of the sea brings other thoughts, culminating in the memory of the sea at his home and the comfort and warmth inherent in the picture of the kettle on the hob

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1. Cf. supra, pp.269-71, D 16, D 144, U 20 and also p.305, ref. PAYM 242.

in preparation for the hot punch. From the boy's sensitivity to cold in the dark chapel, a whole scene is built up of his home by the sea and the sense of warmth within.

Consciousness of the touch of people's hands - their colour and texture and even the touch of his own is something Stephen often alludes to. The most attractive quality in Eileen, his first love, as far as we are told at the beginning of the work, is the cold white softness of her hands. At the table on Christmas Day, when the company had quarrelled over religion, Stephen remembers Eileen who is a Protestant and how the Protestants mocked the Catholic Litany of the Blessed Virgin with its images of 'Tower of Ivory' and 'House of Gold'. His mind returns to the girl he loves:

> Eileen had long white hands. One evening when playing tig she had put her hands over his eyes: long and white and thin and cold and soft. That was ivory: a cold white thing. That was the meaning of 'Tower of Ivory'. (PAYM 37)

With his naïve faith, he believes he has explained the mystery of the 'Tower of Ivory' by associating ivory with the sensual touch of Eileen's cold white hands which had such a mysterious effect on him: the rare and precious material, ivory, cold to the touch, is equated with the holiness of the Virgin Mary, and perhaps also with the chapel which was a cold and holy place. The actual sound of the words 'Tower of Ivory' probably had a fascination for him, irrespective of their meaning, much as a melody

strikes the ear pleasantly and goes on, round and round, in one's head.

At a later point, mention of an elephant having 'two tuskers' brings to Stephen's mind again the memory of Eileen's hands:

> Eileen had long thin cool white hands too because she was a girl. They were like ivory; only soft. That was the meaning of 'Tower of Ivory'.... One day he had stood beside her looking into the hotel grounds... She had put her hand into his pocket where his hand was and he had felt how cool and thin and soft her hand was.... all of a sudden she had broken away and had run laughing down the sloping curve of the path. Her fair hair had streamed out behind her like gold in the sun. 'Tower of Ivory'. 'House of Gold'. By thinking of things you could understand them. (PAYM 44)

The same qualities of whiteness, coldness and softness strike him, but on this occasion, the brilliance of her fair hair shining in the sun as it 'streamed out behind her' when she ran, explains another mystery of the Litany for him,"House of Gold." A visual image of light and richness is created by comparing her hair with gold.

The touch of the rector's palm as Stephen shakes hands with him, reveals something of the latter's temperament. Having summoned up courage to complain to the rector about his unjust punishment, Stephen is moved by the unperturbed, gentle understanding of his superior, epitomised by the sensation of his hand in his - calm and human:-

> The rector held his hand across the side of the desk ... and Stephen, placing his hand in it for a moment, felt a cool moist palm. (PAYM 59)

Years have elapsed and Stephen, full of contrition for having committed carnal sin, goes to his room to pray:

> He closed the door and, walking swiftly to the bed, knelt beside it and covered his face with his hands. His hands were cold and damp and his limbs ached with chill. (PAYM 140)

The cold, damp physical sensation is synonymous for him with his spiritual suffering. The theme of dampness and suffering is repeated when, the crisis over, he leaves the house to go to Confession:

> When evening had fallen he left the house, and the first touch of the damp dark air and the noise of the door as it closed behind him made ache again his conscience,.. (PAYM 142)

The sound of the door closing with its note of finality symbolises the end of a particular phase in his life. The sense of cold, and damp reinforce this image of suffering which is a turning point before he finally recognises his vocation as an artist.

The director at Belvedere suggests to Stephen that he enter the Jesuit order and as he considers it, a variety of sense-impressions come back to him, reminding him of Clongowes with its characteristic warm, damp air. This atmosphere has unpleasant associations for him, as does the coldness of the religious order:

> The troubling odour of the long corridor of Clongowes came back to him... His lungs dilated and sank as if he were inhaling a warm, moist unsustaining air and he smelt again the warm moist air which hung in the bath in Clongowes above the sluggish turfcoloured water.... (PAYM 164)

When he thinks of the priest's life:

> The chill and order of the life repelled him. He saw himself rising in the cold of the morning and filing down with the others to early mass.... (PAYM 164)

He is, in fact, aware of the sense of smell but the main effect is that of the warm claustrophobic atmosphere he associates with his old school and the cold emotional barrenness of the ascetic religious life.

2. LIGHT

It is well known that Joyce suffered from extremely bad eyesight and was almost blind for much of his life. With this in mind, it is natural to expect few visual images, allusions to colour and visible texture or contrasted effects of light and shade. Flaubert's brilliant scenes of rich colour, the romantic connotations of dark trees silhouetted against light reflected in the river or the sensuous qualities of feminine beauty accentuated by fluctuating light are elements which could hardly have struck Joyce in his experience of life and consequently do not appear in his writing. Instead, his scenes are bathed in 'soft grey light', 'faint light', 'veiled grey sunlight'; evenings are described as 'grey and warm'. Even the early morning appears for Stephen as 'a grey curtain' and Lenehan in the story of the 'Two Gallants' watched 'the grey web of twilight move across the face of the moon'. These allusions to light do not strike us as the impact of light on our eyes, but they do convey a great deal by creating the atmosphere of a particular time of day or certain weathers, emphasising a person's mood and generally evoking the sad, drab life of Dublin for the unprivileged classes at that time.

Joyce may not use light in its literal sense to a very great extent, but he does use it metaphorically to express abstract concepts such as the human soul, the

poet's vocation, inspiration and even aesthetic comprehension, deriving from the latin 'claritas'. It appears frequently in combination with movement and hence with the concept of flight or the flow of water.

If we look first at some literal descriptions of light and light and darkness, we shall find a few instances where light is contrasted with darkness, creating an image which remained in the young boy's mind because of its connections with a particular event and not because of its intrinsic beauty. When Stephen is ill at Clongowes, he pictures himself dead:

> All the fellows would be at mass, dressed in black, all with sad faces... The rector would be there in a cope of black and gold and there would be tall yellow candles on the altar and round the catafalque. (PAYM 24)

The imaginary grandeur of the scene is intensified by the black and gold.

He is still in the infirmary but recovering from his illness when the firelight, casting wave-like shadows on the wall, brings another death-scene to his mind:

> How pale the light was at the window! ... The fire rose and fell on the wall. It was like waves. Someone had put coal on and he heard voices. They were talking. It was the noise of the waves or the waves were talking among themselves as they rose and fell.
>
> He saw the sea of waves, long dark waves rising and falling, dark under the moonless night. A tiny light twinkled at the pierhead where the ship was entering.... A tall man stood on the deck, looking out towards the flat dark land: and by the light at the pierhead he saw his face, the sorrowful face of Brother Michael.
> - He is dead. We saw him lying upon the catafalque....
> - Parnell! Parnell! He is dead!

The firelight and the sound of voices produces an image of moving waves which in turn reminds him of a scene at sea, with the darkness of the waves and the night sky and the twinkling light at the pierhead when the death of Parnell was announced to the people gathered there. A visual image is created which is identified with Parnell's death.[1] (PAYM 27)

A parallel could be drawn here between Flaubert's and Joyce's treatment of light shed on walls and its undulating reflections. The passage:

> ... les globes de porcelaine versaient une lumière qui ondulait comme des moires de satin blanc sur les murailles. (ES 177-8)[2]

can be compared with the firelight reflected on the infirmary wall, quoted above. The association with water occurs to both these writers: in Flaubert it is expressed in the characteristic use of 'onduler' and 'moire' with their sensuous connotations of movement and shimmering light; in Joyce by a direct comparison with waves. In the sick boy's mind, waves lead to a succession of other pictorial images of the sea at night, culminating in the news of Parnell's death. In Flaubert, there is a sharply-defined description of a particular sense-impression; in Joyce a comparable sense-impression gives rise to a sequence of images and thoughts.

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1. See infra p.328 note (1) for references to Joyce's treatment of sensory experience leading to trains of thought.

2. For further reference to Flaubert's treatment of light and texture, see pp. 137-140.

A striking image of light and darkness combined with movement and silence can be noted when Stephen and his father travel to Cork by the night-mail train. Motion, indicated by the passing scenery, is reminiscent of Frédéric's train journey to Creil.[1] As they sped by, Stephen saw:

> ...the darkening lands slipping away past him, the silent telegraph poles passing his window swiftly every four seconds, the little glimmering stations, manned by a few silent sentries, flung by the mail behind her and twinkling for a moment in the darkness like fiery grains flung backwards by a runner. (PAYM 89)

The light here intensifies the sense of rapid movement and the same motif of the silent telegraph poles passing by appears later when the rhythm of the train is likened to music:

> .....silently at intervals of four seconds, the telegraph poles held the galloping notes of the music between punctual bars.

A wonderfully complex image is created here of the rhythm of the train felt by Stephen, for which the telegraph poles he sees passing outside at regular intervals provide the musical bars. One could even take the imagery further and liken the telegraph wires to the lines on a musical stave. This process of taking the initial sensory impact of a moment of experience - in this case the rhythm of the train -, and expressing it in terms of other sense-

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1. For further discussion see supra pp. 181-2.

impressions and ideas is, in fact, a poetic process and something very particular to Joyce's style. His art might be compared to the sculptor's who takes a simple object and with his artist's materials reproduces not only the original object but his own interpretation of it. Joyce, by manipulating language, not only recreates experience but gives us a new vision of it.

Light, freshness and fragrance are often associated with an inner sense of mental or emotional relief and tranquillity. For instance, after his vision of hell, when Stephen looks out at the city from his window:

> The rain had drawn off; and amid the moving vapours from point to point of light the city was spinning about herself a soft cocoon of yellowish haze. Heaven was still and faintly luminous and the air sweet to breathe, as in a thicket drenched with showers; and amid peace and shimmering lights and quiet fragrance he made a covenant with his heart. (PAYM 142)

Personification of the city and the mention of 'haze' in association with it is reminiscent of an evening in 'After the Race' when Jimmy and his friend go home

> ....while the city hung its pale globes of light above them in a haze of summer evening. (D 40)

The wonderfully evocative image of 'spinning about herself a soft cocoon of yellowish haze' is rare in Joyce in that it conveys a sense of texture in the soft, delicate, silk-like threads of a cocoon but the predominant effect is still a synthesis of pale, dim light, fragrance and peace. An idyllic moment in Stephen's life has been

crystallised. A comparable moment is described when, having been absolved from his sins through confession, Stephen feels again a sense of calm and purity when he goes to school prayers. This is identified with light and the whiteness and fragrance of the flowers on the altar:

> The altar was heaped with fragrant masses of white flowers; and in the morning light the pale flames of the candles among the white flowers were clear and silent as his own soul. (PAYM 149)

The sense impressions, in these two passages, of light, whiteness, silence and the fresh scent of flowers echo his own inner peace and the sense of purity of soul.

Various qualities of light in association with coldness can be observed in the passage where Stephen watches his friends swimming in the sea:

> The mere sight of that medley of wet nakedness chilled him to the bone. Their bodies, corpse-white or suffused with a pallid golden light or rawly tanned by the sun, gleamed with the wet of the sea..the roughhewn stones of the sloping breakwater...gleamed with cold lustre. The towels with which they smacked their bodies were heavy with cold seawater; and drenched with cold brine was their matted hair. (PAYM 172)

The shining cold bodies of the boys and the stones on the breakwater are described in similar terms - they 'gleamed' with the wet of the sea - as if they were mere surfaces exposed to the elements, and the concept of white cold nakedness is brought out in the use of 'corpse-white' and 'pallid'. Light itself is expressed in various forms - as the rays of the sun which suffused their bodies or 'rawly tanned' them or in the light reflected

on wet surfaces which 'gleamed' on their skin or 'gleamed with cold wet lustre' on the stones. A visual image is created through these different qualities of light and the impact of the wet and cold is repeated in the picture of the towels heavy with cold seawater and their hair completely wet. Texture is also suggested by the expression 'matted hair'. A synthesis of sense-impressions creates an image of human beings and the elements of nature inextricably combined.

Another quality in Joyce's language may strike the reader in this passage - the unusual and poetic effect of the inverted word-order in 'and drenched with cold brine was their matted hair.' It has the musical quality of the Irish lilt and is also reminiscent of the archaic-style language of Tennyson in such works as 'Idylls of the King', where the rhythm gives weight and solemnity to the poem. Joyce may also have been subconsciously influenced by the rhythm of the Catholic liturgy and the flexible word-order of the Latin and Greek he was well-versed in from his Jesuit schooling. An interesting parallel can be found also in modern Greek, where inverted word-order is a common phenomenon. In the following lines from the poet K.P. Cavafi, for example, the verse ends with the main verb followed by its subject, just as in Joyce's phrase, quoted above:

Ἀπ' τά παράθυρα που ἀφίσαμεν ὁλάνιχτα
Τ' ὡραῖο του σῶμα στό κρεββάτι φώτιξε ἡ σελήνη. [1]

A completely literal translation of this would read:

Through the windows which we left wide open
On his beautiful body on the bed, shone the moon.

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1. K.P. Cavafi, ΠΟΙΗΜΑΤΑ (1896-1918) Vol. A. Ikaros, Athens, 1975.

If we turn to the way Joyce weaves light into his imagery, we find it related to various abstract concepts. For example, in Stephen's call to exile as he sees in his mind's eye the light and dark of distant roads and the masts of ships:

> The spell of arms and voices: the white arms of roads, their promise of close embraces and the black arms of tall ships that stand against the moon, their tale of distant nations. They are held out to say: We are alone - come. And the voices say with them: We are your kinsmen. And the air is thick with their company as they call to me, their kinsman, making ready to go, shaking the wings of their exultant and terrible youth. (PAYM 257)

The passionate drive and restlessness of youth and the unusual image of distant white roads holding out a welcome and dark ships' masts in the moonlight symbolising the romance of distant voyages, fuse to convey the abstract concept of flight. The image of birds that gather, preparing to migrate, appears in 'the air is thick with their company' as those who are to leave, get ready; it is repeated in 'shaking the wings of their... youth.'[1]

Further examples of light in imagery may be seen when, in defining the state of the human soul, whether favoured in God's sight or damned, light is equated with salvation and darkness with spiritual death. On his way to confession, Stephen notices some unkempt sales girls sitting on the curbstones with their baskets:

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1. For further discussion of the theme of birds' flight, see infra pp. 303-4.

> They were not beautiful to see as they crouched in the mire. But... if their souls were in a state of grace they were radiant to see: and God loved them, seeing them.
>
> A wasting breath of humiliation blew bleakly over his soul....The wind blew over him and passed on to myriads and myriads of other souls on whom God's favour shone now more and now less, stars now brighter and now dimmer sustained and failing. And the glimmering souls passed away, sustained and failing, merged in a moving breath. One soul was lost; a tiny soul: his. It flickered once and went out, forgotten, lost. The end: black, cold, void waste. (PAYM 144)

Here we see a reversal of Joyce's normal procedure where the sensory impact of experience leads to abstract trains of thought. In this case, the abstract concept of human souls is likened to the visual image of stars in the firmament with their fluctuating, flickering light - a sense-impression of movement and light. The equating of light with spiritual salvation and darkness with damnation is a conventional one but Joyce makes the association more real and also more horrifying by referring to the natural elements figuratively as in: 'A wasting breath of humiliation blew bleakly', 'The wind blew over him', 'stars now brighter and now dimmer' and his soul, like a star or even a candle, 'flickered once and went out'. The abstract concept of physical death is expressed in terms of the physical world - he is faced with 'black, cold, void waste.'

The moment of ecstatic self-realisation as an artist is expressed in terms of radiance and flight - light and movement again:

> His soul was soaring in an air beyond the world and the body he knew was purified in a breath and delivered of incertitude and made radiant and commingled with the element of the spirit. An ecstasy of flight made radiant his eyes and wild his breath and tremulous and wild and radiant his windswept limbs. (PAYM 173)

Here he is analysing a state of complete happiness - his mind, body and soul in harmony. This inner joy described in terms of light and movement, similar to what we feel in dream states, finds physical expression in his shining eyes and his breath as it comes quickly and excitedly. He even seems to have the physical sensation in his limbs of joyous movement through the air, indicated by the curious reference to 'windswept limbs'. This unique moment of experience or 'epiphany' as Joyce himself has termed it,[1] is expressed in a flexible inter-change of metaphorical and literal references to light

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1. The concept of 'epiphany' is basic to the understanding of Joyce's work. Harry Levin explains his use of the term and records some points about his personality:

> He was the sort of person that Henry James advises the novelist to be, 'one of those people on whom nothing is lost.' The friends of his student days were quick to sense that he went among them taking notes. 'So he recorded under Epiphany', says Dr. Gogarty, 'any showing forth of the mind by which he considered one gave oneself away.' .... The writer, no longer hoping to comprehend modern life in its chaotic fullness, was searching for external clues to its inner meaning.
>
> An epiphany is a spiritual manifestation, more especially the original manifestation of Christ to the Magi. There are such moments in store for all of us, Joyce believed, if we do but discern them.

H. Levin, James Joyce: a critical introduction, Faber & Faber, 1947. p.27.

and movement. We also have another example of lilting rhythm and inverted word-order reminiscent of the liturgy in 'An ecstasy of flight made radiant his eyes and wild his breath and tremulous and wild and radiant his wind-swept limbs'.[1]

The motif of 'radiance' to express literary creation, with all its religious associations, is repeated in Stephen's definition of the artist whom he sees as:

> ... a priest of the eternal imagination, transmuting the daily bread of experience into the radiant body of everlasting life. (PAYM 225)

A moment of poetic inspiration, as he wakes one day towards dawn, is associated first with the sound of music, 'cool waves of light' and water:

> O what sweet music! His soul was all dewy wet. Over his limbs in sleep pale cool waves of light had passed. He lay still, as if his soul lay amid cool waters, conscious of faint sweet music. His mind was waking slowly to a tremulous morning knowledge, a morning inspiration. A spirit filled him, pure as the purest water, sweet as dew, moving as music.....His soul was waking slowly, fearing to awake wholly. It was that windless hour of dawn when madness wakes and strange plants open to the light and the moth flies forth silently..... (PAYM 221)

Stephen's first sensation on waking is of sweet sound and cool freshness: the coolness becomes associated with waves of early morning light, the waves then with cool water and the water again with sweet music. The physical sensations and the mental processes are oompletely fused.

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1. For more detailed discussion, see supra, p.279

He then returns to the actual physical world at dawn with its silence and mystery: 'it was that windless hour of dawn when...strange plants open to the light...' The actual moment of inspiration is then described in terms of the dawn light which he sees shining from the clouds, deepening gradually to a pinkish hue.

> The instant of inspiration seemed now to be reflected from all sides.... The instant flashed forth like a point of light and now from cloud on cloud of vague circumstance confused form was veiling softly its afterglow.... An afterglow deepened within his spirit, whence the white flame had passed, deepening to a rose and ardent light. That rose and ardent light was her strange wilful heart, strange that no man had known or would know, wilful from before the beginning of the world; and lured by that ardent roselike glow the choirs of the seraphim were falling from heaven. (PAYM 221-222)

The flashing light evolves into a white flame which leaves an afterglow of warmth. The concept of 'rose and ardent light' becomes associated with passion, reminding him of the villanelle:

> Are you not weary of ardent ways,...?

A rich and complex development of thought can be traced through this metaphorical use of sense-impressions: light - physical warmth - erotic warmth - lyrical sound. The imagery of light and warmth continues, relating itself to language: rhyme and associations of sound:

> ...he felt the rhythmic movement of a villanelle pass through him. The roselike glow sent forth its rays of rhyme; ways, days, blaze, praise, raise. Its rays burned up the world, consumed the hearts of men and angels: the rays from the rose that was her wilful heart. (PAYM 222)

These associations of pure sound - 'raise' 'rays' and 'rays from the rose' have something of the character of a child's jingle and are a pointer to Joyce's subsequent use of language in Ulysses, where the attraction of sounds and their associations are predominant in expressing cerebral processes.

When morning has finally come, light and sound appear in their literal sense, while his joyous state is described metaphorically in the term 'roselight':

> .....the morning light was gathering. A bell beat faintly very far away. A bird twittered; two birds, three. The bell and the bird ceased; and the dull white light spread itself east and west, covering the world, covering the roselight in his heart. (PAYM 222-223)

If we look back over the passages relating to Stephen's emotions, sense of vocation and moments of artistic inspiration and compare them with Frédéric's moments of rapture or despondency, some interesting points emerge. Stephen is acutely conscious of his body and of the movements of his mind. His is an introspection, not of a kind that poses philosophical questions, such as we shall see later in the study of Virginia Woolf, but which notes the precise nature of physical sensations and the thoughts these evoke. Frédéric also experiences raptures of happiness, depression and despair, but these states are commented on in general terms by Flaubert, rather than analysed by Frédéric himself, or they are fused into a pantheistic view of the world. While Stephen seems to

take the world into his own being and to express this wealth of sensory experience in a new artistic form,[1] Frédéric is only aware of a variety of emotions which are inextricably connected with his particular surroundings. In their reactions to experience, Stephen and Frédéric exemplify the creative and the passive spirit.

Let us watch Frédéric, ecstatically happy, as he returns home at night after his first meeting with Madame Arnoux. His emotions colour whatever touches his senses - the effects of light, colour and movement in the relections in the Seine, the luminous fog, the grey buildings and the sound of a church bell chiming are all intensified. When he finally reaches home:

> Son visage s'offrait à lui dans la glace. Il se trouva beau; - il resta une minute à se regarder. (ES 68)

We are left to imagine his state of inner joy, as we are left to sense that his happiness and the beauty of the night merge into a single sensation of harmony. Frédéric does not, at any point, actually examine his emotions. A further point of interest is that he <u>happened</u> to catch sight of himself in the mirror. It is Frédéric's innate passivity which conditions his character, his experience of the world and even the way events happen to him, rather

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1. Stephen states his intention in his diary dated April 26:
   > Welcome, O Life! I go to encounter for the millionth time the reality of experience and to forge in the smithy of my soul the uncreated conscience of my race. (PAYM 257)

than his taking hold of his own destiny. When he and Deslauriers look over their past and their failures, they blame chance and the era they were born into:

> ....et ils accusèrent le hasard,[1] les circonstances, l'époque où ils étaient nés. (ES 453)

Frédéric's lack of self-examination and tendency to blame outside circumstances for his lack of success or happiness are made evident from the outset when Flaubert tells us how Frédéric, on board the 'Ville-de-Montereau',

> ... trouvait que le bonheur mérité par l'excellence de son âme tardait à venir. (ES 96)

His passivity even prevents him from taking the final step when, in a state of utter despair, he contemplates suicide, but:

> Le parapet était un peu large, et ce fut par lassitude qu'il n'essaya pas de le franchir. (ES 96)

To form a link between Frédéric's passive reaction to experience and Stephen's positive, creative instinct, we may make a comparison between the void which Frédéric confronts in his state of misery and Stephen's vision when he contemplates death and damnation. Frédéric watches as:

> Des nuées sombres couraient sur la face de la lune. Il la contempla, en rêvant à la grandeur des espaces, à la misère de la vie, au néant de tout. (ES 96)

He thinks in very general terms of man's misery and the vanity and nothingness of life, whereas for Stephen, it is death that means a 'black, cold, void waste.'

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1. See J. Bruneau, 'Le role du hasard dans L'Éducation sentimentale', Europe, 1969, pp. 101-7.

Life, once he has discovered his vocation, is a thing of joy and passion to be experienced to the full and expressed in artistic form.

If we look once more at the descriptions of his sense of vocation and moments of inspiration, we read:

> An ecstasy of flight made radiant his eyes and wild his breath and tremulous and wild and radiant his windswept limbs. (PAYM 173)

or of a moment of inspiration:

> Over his limbs in sleep, pale cool waves of light had passed. He lay still, as if his soul lay amid cool waters,... His mind was waking slowly to a tremulous, morning knowledge, a morning inspiration.

and as the day dawns:

> An afterglow deepened within his spirit, whence the white flame had passed, deepening to a rose and ardent light.

When the poetry begins to form in his mind:

> The verses passed from his mind to his lips and, murmuring them over, he felt the rhythmic movement of a villanelle pass through them.

The day finally dawns:

> ...the dull white light spread itself east and west covering the world, covering the roselight in his heart. (PAYM 221-3)

His awareness of physical sensations, even of the dawn light which he feels flowing over his body like water, becomes a moment of rapture which he records as making his eyes shine and his limbs feel as if they are 'windswept'. After the moment of inspiration has passed, a physical warmth fills him like an 'afterglow' and he actually feels the 'rhythmic movement of the villanelle pass through' the lines of verse. All of these sensations are consciously

felt within his body and related to poetic expression.

Frédéric's passivity is in keeping with Flaubert's own words about L'Éducation sentimentale. It is a book of love and passion, but passion:

> 'telle qu'elle peut exister maintenant, c'est-à-dire inactive.'[1]

Stephen is the creative artist whose dream is:

> To live, to err, to fall, to triumph, to recreate life out of life. (PAYM 176)

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1. Letter to Mlle Leroyer de Chantepie, October 6th 1864, Correspondance, ~~Trois~~ cinquième série, 1862-68, p.~~287~~ 158. ~~Charpentier, 1925~~.

3. SOUND

Sounds seem to have had an infinite attraction for Joyce - whether in the onomatopoeic effect of a word and the associations it had for him, particularly as a child, or in the musical qualities inherent in language itself. It is known that he had an excellent tenor voice and a very good ear for music, which must have conditioned his love of the melodious and rhythmical qualities in literature. A first-rate knowledge of many modern foreign languages and a thorough Jesuit training in the classics must have also played their part in his feeling for language.

Words, irrespective of their meaning, have a fascination of their own as the young narrator in 'The Sisters' tells us:

> I said softly to myself the word 'paralysis'. It had always sounded strangely in my ears like the word 'gnomon' in the Euclid and the word 'simony' in the Catechism. (D 7)

In A Portrait - Stephen himself analyses what it is that attracts him to language:

> He drew forth a phrase from his treasure and spoke it softly to himself:
> - A day of dappled seaborne clouds.
> The phrase and the day and the scene harmonised in a chord. Words. Was it their colours? He allowed them to glow and fade, hue after hue: sunrise gold, the russet and green or apple orchards, azure of waves, the grey-fringed fleece of clouds. No, it was not their colours: it was the poise and balance of the period itself. Did he then love the rhythmic rise and fall of words better than their associations of legend and colour? Or was it that, being as weak of sight as he was shy of mind, he drew less pleasure from the reflection of the glowing sensible world through the prism of a language many-coloured and richly storied than from the contemplation of an inner world of individual emotions mirrored perfectly in a lucid supple periodic prose? (PAYM 170-1)

It appears, then, that the rhythm and use of a language which precisely expressed his feelings had a far greater charm for him than a language of rich visual imagery. The fact that he had always suffered from very poor eyesight must have accentuated his awareness of sound, as also his sensitivity to smell, sensations of hot and cold and tactile impressions.[1]

Another aspect of this question is Joyce's awareness of sound and its hypnotic qualities as shown in his use of literary devices such as repetition, assonance, and alliteration and the characteristic use of a motif which reappears in slightly different form, creating a sense of unity within the structure of the work and pin-pointing certain outstanding memories and experiences. These motifs are reminiscent of musical themes and their variations. This is a feature which has been pointed out in connection with other sense-impressions, for Joyce rarely confines himself to describing an isolated sense-impression - there is generally a synthesis of sense-impressions leading to a train of thought.[2] The melodious effect of repetition - the picking up of themes and altering them slightly is a favourite stylistic device of Joyce's.

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1. Cf. supra, relative sections on Smell, pp. 252-261 and Heat and cold, pp. 263-272 and infra, section on Smell, pp. 307-330.

2. Cf. infra, p. 328 note (1).

We may examine first some early impressions in Stephen's life and the attraction and associations that certain words and sounds had for him. The onomatopeic word 'suck', for instance, with its various meanings, led his mind from one point to another:

> Suck was a queer word. The fellow called Simon Moonan that name because Simon Moonan used to tie the prefect's false sleeves behind his back...But the sound was ugly. Once he had washed his hands in the lavatory of the Wicklow Hotel... and the dirty water went down through the hole... and had made a sound like that: suck. Only louder. (PAYM 11)

He also tries to analyse in his child's mind the significance of kissing his mother goodnight and what, in fact, this onomatopeic word meant:

> Was it right to kiss his mother or wrong to kiss his mother? What did that mean, to kiss? You put your face up like that to say goodnight and then his mother...put her lips on his cheek; her lips were soft and they wetted his cheek; and they made a tiny little noise: kiss. Why did people do that with their two faces? (PAYM 15)

On this occasion, the tactile sensation of the soft wet touch of his mother's kiss and the actual sound it made imprint themselves on his memory - the impact is a purely sensory one. His train of thought had led to these memories of sense-impressions of sound and texture.

The sound of passing trains figures in his memory as an association with life far away from school or leaving school for the holidays. As he sat in the noisy school refectory feeling miserable, opening and shutting the flaps of his ears reminded him of train journeys through tunnels:

He wanted to cry. He leaned his elbows on the table and shut and opened the flaps of his ears. Then he heard the noise of the refectory every time he opened the flaps of his ears. It made a roar like a train at night. And when he closed the flaps the roar was shut off like a train going into a tunnel. That night at Dalkey the train had roared like that... He closed his eyes and the train went on, roaring and then stopping; roaring again, stopping. It was nice to hear it roar and stop... (PAYM 13)

He is homesick and ill and the world of fantasy created by the effects of sound and darkness into which he withdraws, comforts him. As in the last example, the impact is a sensory one.

The image of the train taking the boys home for Christmas also comes clearly to his mind; a visual image with colour, movement and the onomatopeic effect of sound:

> The train was full of fellows: a long, long chocolate train with cream facings. The guard went to and fro opening, closing, locking, unlocking the doors. They were men in dark blue and silver; they had silvery whistles and their keys made a quick music: click, click: click click. (PAYM 20)

The festive associations of this scene are indicated by the child's vision of the train as being coloured 'chocolate' rather than a mere dull 'brown', and by the contrasted blue and silver in the officials' uniforms. The silver motif is taken up again in slightly different form in the 'silvery whistles'. This type of repetition has a melodious effect, as mentioned previously in the general comments on Joyce's awareness of sound.[1] Quick

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1. For further references, see: p.315, PAYM 71, 226
pp.321-2, PAYM 31, 20-1, 27
pp.294-7, PAYM 42-3,45,46,60
pp.240-1, D 188, 190
pp.242-3, D 191, 191-2.

movements and repeated locking and unlocking of doors are expressed so aptly by the phrase 'quick music' and the onomatopoeic 'click, click.'

The characteristic sound of cricket bats at school on grey summer evenings comes up repeatedly. It provides one of the best examples of Joyce's stylistic technique in that he picks up a theme and builds on it, adding other sense-impressions to catch a moment of experience or a particular atmosphere. The cricket season was approaching:

> And from here and from there came the sounds of the cricket bats through the soft grey air. They said: pick, pack, pock, puck: little drops of water in a fountain slowly falling in the brimming bowl. (PAYM 42-3)

The precision with which the sound is reproduced is amazing - both in the onomatopeic 'pick, pack, pock, puck' and the parallel visual image accompanied by the sound of drops of water falling from a fountain into the pool below. The emotive qualities in the expression 'soft grey air' to convey an atmosphere of dull light and faint melancholy have been discussed previously.[1] A calm lyrical effect is produced by the combination of the sense-impressions of gentle sound and soft texture.

The sound motif is picked up again as the boys conjecture what form the punishment of their colleagues is to take:

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1. Cf. supra, p. 273.

> All the fellows were silent. The air was very silent and you could hear the cricket bats but more slowly than before: pick, pock. (PAYM 45)

It is a background sound this time and the effect of distance is emphasised by the accompanying silence and reference to two sounds only - 'pick, pock', instead of the previous four. The next reference takes up again the 'soft grey air', accompanied now by silence and a single isolated knock on the bat:

> In the silence of the soft grey air he heard the cricket bats from here and from there: pock. (PAYM 46)

The melodious effect of repetition is evident here in the skilful building up of sense impressions mentioned in the previous passages - sound and silence, texture and colour in the 'soft grey air' and repetition of the expression 'from here and from there'. On each occasion there is slight variation in the sequence of the sense-impressions and repeated phrases.

The last passage establishes the rather tense atmosphere as the boys consider apprehensively the subject of corporal punishments; the sensory impact of the single sound 'pock' sets off a train of thought in Stephen's mind, related to other types of sounds and associated sensations:

> .....pock. That was a sound to hear but if you were hit then you would feel a pain. The pandybat made a sound too but not like that...There were different kinds of sounds. A long thin cane would have a high whistling sound and he wondered what was that pain like. It made him shivery to think of it and cold: but that was because you always felt like a shiver when you let down your trousers. It was the same in the bath when you undressed yourself. (PAYM 46)

Sound is allied to the sense of pain which in turn evokes a sense of cold. This brings his mind back to the subject of punishment - being beaten with one's trousers down and hence nakedness and undressing for the bath. The sense-impression of sound has led by association to a whole world of schoolboy experience - from beatings to taking baths.

The final allusion to the sound of cricket bats on a summer evening occurs at the end of the section on Clongowes, after Stephen's complaint of undeserved punishment to the rector and the approbation of his fellow pupils. They cheered the rector:

> The cheers died away in the soft grey air. He was alone. He was happy and free;.. The air was soft and grey and mild and evening was coming. There was the smell of evening in the air, the smell of the fields in the country where they digged up turnips to peel them and eat them when they went out for a walk to Major Barton's, the smell there was in the little wood beyond the pavilion where the gallnuts were.
>
> The fellows were practising long shies and bowling lobs and slow twisters. In the soft grey silence he could hear the bump of the balls: and from here and from there through the quiet air the sound of the cricket bats: pick, pack, pock, puck: like drops of water in a fountain falling softly in the brimming bowl. (PAYM 60)

Stephen's sense of relief and quiet content is reflected in the atmosphere evoked by repeated allusion to the soft texture of the air: 'the soft grey air', 'the air was soft and grey and mild' and 'the soft grey silence.' The previous themes of 'soft grey air' and 'silence' have been repeated and added to - now there is also the sense-impression of warmth in the reference to the air being

'mild'. To this background atmosphere is added the sensation of smell - the characteristic smell of fields, turnips and woods. The description culminates in the familiar motif of the 'pick,pack,pock,puck' of the bats. The wording is almost identical with the original passage - only the drops from the fountain fall 'softly' instead of 'slowly', thus emphasising the gentle quality of the sound.

The general effect produced by this synthesis of sound, silence, texture and smell with a motif repeated with slight variations could be compared with that of a poem or folk-song with a slightly different refrain after each verse; or a piece of orchestral music with a recurrent theme picked out by different instruments, modified and added to, ending in a grand finale of all the instruments, each contributing, as it were, their own sense-impression.

As the work continues, there are passages where sound is equated with waves of emotion and with flowing water or the waves of the sea as symbols of joy and his literary vocation which may carry him far from his native land. When Stephen is still at Belvedere a school play is performed. The theatre with its illuminations appears to him like an ark with 'frail cables of lanterns looping her to her moorings'. The sound of the music and his own emotion become interwoven:

> A sudden burst of music issued from the ark, the prelude of a waltz: and when the sidedoor closed again the listener could hear the faint rhythm of the music. The sentiment of the opening bars, their languor and supple movement, evoked the incommunicable emotion which had been the cause of all his day's unrest..... His unrest issued from him like a wave of sound: and on the tide of flowing music the ark was journeying, trailing her cables of lanterns in her wake. Then a noise like dwarf artillery broke the movement. It was the clapping that greeted the entry of the dumbbell team on the stage. (PAYM 76-7)

The music echoes his own feeling of passionate longing and this emotion in turn becomes like a wave of sound. The imagery continues in the picture of the ark moving on 'the tide of flowing music' and suddenly halted by the 'dwarf artillery' of the audience's applause. The sense-impression of sound and the sensation of movement closely related to it help to create visual images which represent Stephen's emotions.

The association of water with emotion appears again when Stephen watches the wheeling of the swallows which reminds him of a verse where:

> " .....the swallow gazes
> Upon the next under the eave before
> He wander the loud waters." (PAYM 230)

The homelessness of swallows is symbolic of the artist's voluntary exile. Stephen equates his own fate with that of the swallows:

> A soft liquid joy like the noise of many waters flowed over his memory and he felt in his heart the soft peace of silent spaces of fading tenuous sky above the waters, of oceanic silence, of swallows flying through the seadusk over the flowing waters. (PAYM 230)

The movement of the swallows which are continually making new homes and leaving them awakens in Stephen a sense of joy which is expressed in a visual image of flowing water. The peace he feels is conveyed in the silence and the visual image of the ethereal sky over vast expanses of sea and again the swallows flying at dusk over the waves. There is a synthesis of sound, movement and visual images to express the abstract quality of joy. The metaphorical use of the textures 'soft' and 'liquid' helps to express this emotion still more precisely. The imagery continues - his sense of joy now related to the language of the verse itself:

> A soft liquid joy flowed through the words where the soft long vowels hurtled noiselessly and fell away, lapping and flowing back and ever shaking the white bells of their waves in mute chime and mute peal, and soft low swooning cry; and he felt that the augury he had sought in the wheeling darting birds and in the pale sky above him had come forth from his heart like a bird from a turret, quietly and swiftly. (PAYM 230)

The sounds of the words are described in terms of the movement of the waves as they break and flow back and the crests like seahorses which shake their 'white bells... in mute chime' and make a low gentle sound. The involved imagery helps to convey Stephen's sense of joy in the sound of language and the realisation of his own destiny, which are symbolised in the movement of the birds and the continual ebb and flow of the waves.

4. *MOVEMENT*

The sense-impression of movement is one to which Joyce seems to have been relatively less sensitive. It is most frequently to be observed in combination with other sense-impressions which are of greater importance in the general context. It is often found in connection with sound - for example, in the movement and sound of flowing water in its literal or metaphorical sense; or in descriptions of movement expressed by sounds which strike the ear through repetition, alliteration and onomatopeia.

A striking example in which movement is accompanied by sound, light, colour and smell and intensive use of literary devices can be found in the nauseating vision of hell conjured up in Stephen's imagination:

> A field of stiff weeds and thistles... A faint marshlight struggling upwards from all the ordure through the bristling greygreen weeds. An evil smell, faint and foul as the light, curled upwards sluggishly...
>
> Creatures were in the field: one, three, six: creatures were moving in the field, hither and thither. Goatish creatures with human faces,.. and grey as indiarubber. The malice of evil glittered in their hard eyes, as they moved hither and thither,... A rictus of cruel malignity lit up greyly their old bony faces... Soft language issued from their spittleless lips as they swished in slow circles round and round the field, winding hither and thither through the weeds, dragging their long tails amid the rattling canisters. They moved in slow circles, circling close and closer to enclose, to enclose, soft language issuing from their lips, their long swishing tails besmeared with stale shite, thrusting upwards their terrific faces.... (PAYM 141)

Constant movement in this odious, nightmarish scene is conveyed by the frequent repetition of 'hither and thither', while a variety of verbs implying motion contribute to produce this impression: 'swish', 'wind', 'drag', 'move in slow circles', 'circle' and 'enclose'. Movement is even used metaphorically to intensify the impression of the foul stench in 'An evil smell curled upwards sluggishly...' The predominance of the colour grey helps to emphasise the repulsive and deathly quality of the visual image - their faces were 'grey as india-rubber', evil in their eyes lit up their faces 'greyly', and even the weeds were 'greygreen'. The effects of sound add to this synthesis of sense-impressions and visual images in the 'soft language [which] issued from their lips'. But a far more striking aspect of sound is evident in the enormous amount of alliteration with the letter 's' and the predominance of the 's', 'sh' sounds in general. The above quotation - 'soft language [which] issued from their spittleless lips', and which appears twice, is a perfect example. There are many others: 'they swished in slow circles round and round...', 'They moved in slow circles circling closer and closer to enclose, to enclose... 'Their long swishing tails besmeared with stale shite...' The 's' and 'sh' sounds have connotations of slow, snake-like movement; when repeated as often as they are here, they even have an obsessive quality.

A scene of movement which again presents a visual image and reflects Stephen's state of mind - in this case, joyous self-realisation, occurs in the passage where he walks by the shore:

> There was a long rivulet in the strand and, as he waded slowly up its course, he wondered at the endless drift of seaweed. Emerald and black and russet and olive, it moved beneath the current, swaying and turning. The water of the rivulet was dark with endless drift and mirrored the highdrifting clouds. The clouds were drifting above him silently and silently the seatangle was drifting below him and the grey warm air was still and a new wild life was singing in his veins.
> (PAYM 175)

Repetition of 'drift', 'drifting' and 'highdrifting' in connection with the seaweed, the clouds reflected in the water and the clouds as they moved in the sky, emphasises a particular quality of movement and unites the two elements of sea and sky. A third element - the warm air, adds to the sense of unity and harmony of which Stephen feels so much a part. The repetition of silence in connection with the moving clouds and seaweed and the stillness of the air intensify again this sense of unity. The clear colour of the seaweed, so rare a phenomenon in Joyce,adds to the clarity of the visual image and reflects the comparable clarity with which Stephen is beginning to view his own destiny.

Standing, blissfully happy, at the water's edge, he notices a young girl whose pure beauty and soft, bird-like qualities act as a kind of affirmation of life and love. Gentle movement and faint sound add to the image:

> She was alone and still, gazing out to sea;.. Long, long she suffered his gaze and then quietly withdrew her eyes from his and bent them towards the stream, gently stirring the water with her foot hither and thither. The first faint noise of gently moving water broke the silence, low and faint and whispering, faint as the bells of sleep; hither and thither, hither and thither; and a faint flame trembled on her cheek. (PAYM 175-6)

Repetition of 'hither and thither' intensifies the feeling of constant movement[1] and the gentle sound of the lapping water adds a sensuous quality to a scene which has already awoken joy and passion in the onlooker. A moment of experience has been imprinted on his mind for ever through the sensory impact of a visual image, accompanied by movement and sound:

> Her image had passed into his soul for ever and no word had ~~been~~ broken the holy silence of his ecstasy. (PAYM 176)

Movement is also associated with the flight of birds and even bats which come to symbolise the vocation of the artist and the necessity of leaving the homeland. As Stephen stands on the steps of the library, he watches the birds' flight:

> They flew round and round the jutting shoulder of a house in Molesworth Street. The air of the late March evening made clear their flight, their dark, darting quivering bodies flying clearly against the sky as against a limphung cloth of smoky tenuous blue.
>
> He watched their flight; bird after bird: a dark flash, a swerve, a flutter of wings... They were flying high and low but ever round and round in straight and curving lines and ever flying from left to right, circling about a temple of air. (PAYM 228)

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1. Cf. supra, pp. 300-1.

Movements of many varying kinds are described here: the birds' 'darting quivering bodies', the way in which their wings 'flash', 'swerve' and 'flutter' and the direction of their flight - 'high and low', 'round and round' and in 'straight and curving lines....circling about a temple of air.' This last image expresses so clearly the sense of the wide circular sweep of the birds' flight, as if round some invisible 'temple'. The same scene is repeated, in slightly different wording, a little later. The sound the birds made calmed Stephen:

> The inhuman clamour soothed his ears in which his mother's sobs and reproaches murmured insistently and the dark frail quivering bodies wheeling and fluttering and swerving round an airy temple of the tenuous sky soothed his eyes which still saw the image of his mother's face. (PAYM 229)

The theme of the 'dark... quivering bodies' has been taken up again, as also the 'airy temple' and the 'tenuous sky' which as visual images 'soothed his eyes' as he remembered his mother and her reproaches. Repetition of a theme with slight variations in wording, as above - the notion of 'frail' has been added to qualify the birds' bodies, is a characteristic device of Joyce's.[1] The particular use of 'tenuous' in this context indicates a faintly lit, pale blue evening sky, 'smoky' as he says, not clear and thin in texture like a piece of 'cloth'. The lack of bright light and colour is also characteristic of Joyce's

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1. Cf. p. 293 for further references.

landscapes - we see in his writing a great predominance of evening scenes in the half-light.

The birds' movement awakens a host of thoughts in Stephen's mind. Through the ages, men had watched birds in flight, looking for auguries. Swedenborg had considered birds as 'creatures of the air [that] have their knowledge and know their times and seasons because they, unlike man, are in the order of their life and have not perverted that order by reason.' Again, the birds return... '<u>flying darkly against the fading air</u>'. The motif of the faint light in the sky is repeated in the 'fading air' and later, in the 'soft peace of silent spaces of <u>fading tenuous sky</u> above the waters'. (PAYM 230)

Another type of movement - the flight of bats, is associated symbolically with the inner world of the Irish, as Stephen sees it:

> And under the deepened dusk <u>he felt the thoughts and desires of the race to which he belonged flitting like bats across the dark country lanes, under trees by the edges of streams and near the poolmottled bogs</u>. A woman had waited in the doorway as Davin had passed by at night and, offering him a cup of milk, had all but wooed him to her bed;... (PAYM 242)

The poetic quality of this passage is most striking: the impact of the visual image of a dark evening scene is complemented by the movement of the bats as they flit through lanes, by streams, under trees and near the bogs, described so originally as 'poolmottled'. This conveys the impression of a smooth, uniform surface blotched with

colour and luminosity where the pools lay. Coining a single word to evoke a combination of impressions, sensations or thoughts is a favourite technique of Joyce's.[1] On another level, behind this passage is the portrayal of a people, uneducated and unaware, living instinctively, blindly as the bat, in darkness, close to the nature they are part of. The woman who had offered herself to Davin so willingly as he passed her home at night stands as a symbol of the elemental passion of the simple Irish peasant, which Joyce loved.

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1. Cf. pp. 260-1 for another example.

5. SMELL

Joyce's particular sensitivity to smell has already been noted in the relative section on Dubliners, but it appears with special force and predominance in A Portrait. Perfumes and odours are, by association, a means of characterising facets of various people and environments. With this work it is even possible to examine the subject in categories, as was done for the writings of Flaubert, though there will naturally be some variations:

1. Smell and imagery
2. Smell in its literal sense
   - (i) Natural smells associated with the countryside and the seashore
   - (ii) Scents and their erotic and sophisticated associations
   - (iii) Smells connected with city and domestic life
   - (iv) Smells connected with the church, religious services and, by association, scenes of heaven and hell

1. Smell and imagery

Imagery in this particular section plays a very minor role so we may examine this aspect first before moving on to the main subject of smell used in its literal sense.

One example, conveying a sense of beauty, purity and sanctity occurs after Stephen has confessed his sins:

> ... his prayers ascended to heaven from his purified heart like perfume streaming upwards from a heart of white rose. (PAYM 149)

The white of the rose intensifies the idea of purity. On a later occasion, the Dean at the University strikes Stephen as someone whose:

> ... very soul had waxed old in that service (of the Lord) without growing towards light or beauty, or spreading abroad a sweet odour of her sanctity... (PAYM 190)

The abstract notion of holiness radiates a light or permeates everything with fragrance - concepts which touch the senses.

2. Smell in its literal sense

(i) Natural smells associated with the countryside and the seashore

At the outset of the story, these smells are closely associated with the familiar but often unsavoury odours of decaying vegetation and manure and general dampness in the gardens round Stephen's home when he was young. As the story moves on and Stephen discovers his vocation and enters the freer intellectual world of the university, the gardens have been left behind and the scents seem to come predominantly from the trees and earth of the parks, still sodden and generally associated with a morbid impression of rot and decay. He even says of himself, when a university student, that 'whether he looked around the little class of students or out of the window across the desolate gardens of the green an odour assailed him of cheerless cellar-damp and decay'. (PAYM 181)

Moisture and a prevailing soft grey light are characteristic of the surroundings in which Stephen grows up, symbolic as it were of the drabness of poverty and the melancholy automatically associated with it.

After the play at Belvedere, Stephen drowns his disappointment at not meeting Eileen afterwards by walking off blindly, as fast as he can. Finally he comes to a halt:

> He stood still and gazed up at the sombre porch of the morgue and from that to the dark cobbled laneway at its side. He saw the word 'Lotts' on the wall of the lane and breathed slowly the rank heavy air. - That is horse piss and rotted straw, he thought. It is a good odour to breathe. It will calm my haart. My heart is quite calm now. I will go back. (PAYM 89)

These unpleasant but homely odours, coupled with the darkness and silence, calm and comfort him. They symbolise the regular, unchanging life of the animals and restore his sense of security.

Another unpleasant odour - rotted cabbages, symbolises home for him, but from a different aspect: the disorganisation and confusion which ruled his home and sowed in him the germs of the artist:

> ....he followed the lane which led up to his house. The faint sour stink of rotted cabbages came towards him from the kitchen gardens on the rising ground above the river. He smiled to think that it was this disorder, the misrule, the confusion of his father's house and the stagnation of vegetable life, which was to win the day in his soul (PAYM 165-167)

The dilemma as to whether he should take religious orders or not is solved for him as he senses his allegiance to the world of physical nature, disorderly and squalid though it might be.

When Stephen has entered the university, as he leaves the house and wanders through the streets or makes his way to classes, a variety of scenes appeal to his senses through the damp fragrance of soggy earth or trees after rain. Trying to wipe out from his mind the voices that had irritated him as he left early for his classes:

> He drove their echoes even out of his heart with an execration; but, as he walked down the avenue and felt the grey morning light falling about him through the dripping trees and smelt the strange wild smell of the wet leaves and bark, his soul was loosed of her miseries. (PAYM 179)

Just as the odour of horse-manure had had a therapeutic effect when he was grief-stricken after the play, so here the natural damp scents of the trees calm him.

On a later occasion he walks through the streets and is reminded of the dead by 'a slab...set to the memory of Wolfe Tone.' He had been present at the laying of it. Now he finds that:

> ....the trees in Stephen's Green were fragrant of rain and the rainsodden earth gave forth its mortal odour, a faint incense rising upward through the mould from many hearts. (PAYM 187)

After the rain the trees give off a fresh scent but the earth, which is 'rainsodden' and covered with 'mould', has connotations of damp and rotting vegetation and even human remains. A morbid image is created of buried bodies giving off an odour which mingles with the damp smell of the living trees. Joyce's obsessive preoccupation with corpses is illustrated again in Ulysses though the treatment is utterly different. He uses the interior monologue to its full effect to express Bloom's mentality and macabre sense of humour through a series of visual images full of lurid colours and repulsive textures. It is the occasion of Dignan's funeral and Bloom's mind broods upon the graveyard:

> I daresay the soil would be quite fat with corpse manure, bones, flesh, nails, charnelhouses. Dreadful. Turning green and pink, decomposing. Rot quick in damp earth. The lean and old ones tougher. Then a kind of a tallowy kind of a cheesy. Then begin to get black, treacle oozing out of them. Then dried up... (U 110)

The progression in style from descriptions of scenes through Stephen's eyes and occasional interior monologue to Bloom's prolonged trains of thought consisting of a sequence of impressions and ideas, often ungrammatically expressed, is a point already referred to.[1]

Unlike the lyrical fragrant scenes in gardens, forests and by riversides, so common in Flaubert's work, the world of nature to Joyce seems oppressive, even hostile. As Stephen walks by the canal with Lynch discussing aesthetic beauty:

> A crude grey light, mirrored in the sluggish water and a smell of wet branches over their heads seemed to war against the course of Stephen's thought. (PAYM 211)

The damp odour of trees, the stagnant water and dull grey light can do nothing to inspire him - they are heavy, drab and lifeless. Even the seashore, which one might associate with salty freshness, sticks in Stephen's mind as a place of 'stale odours' from which they returned as boys with the 'rank oil of the seawrack upon their hands and in their hair.' (PAYM 65)

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1. See Introduction, p.43

A single example comes to mind in which the natural smells of the earth have pleasant associations - an example which is, in fact, a synthesis of smell, light and sound. Stephen is watching E.C. and her friends sheltering from a passing shower, near the University:

> The quick light shower had drawn off, tarrying in clusters of diamonds among the shrubs of the quadrangle where an exhalation was breathed forth by the blackened earth. Their trim boots prattled as they stood on the steps of the colonnade talking quietly and gaily,... holding their umbrellas at cunning angles against the few last raindrops,.. (PAYM 220-221)

His vision coloured by his feelings for her and the attraction these young girls hold for him, the drops of rain on the shrubs appear as glittering diamonds, the black earth gives off a fresh odour and the girls' boots make short, sharp sounds on the steps like feminine voices which 'prattled'. The metaphorical use of this word is most expressive in this context. The picture Joyce draws is full of charm and femininity and the freshness of the earth contributes to the image.

A striking parallel can be found in Madame Bovary where Emma is being observed by Charles at les Bertaux as she stands sheltering under her parasol:

> L'ombrelle, de soie gorge-de-pigeon, que traversait le soleil, éclairait de reflets mobiles la peau blanche de sa figure. Elle souriait là-dessous à la chaleur tiède; et on entendait les gouttes d'eau, une à une, tomber sur la moire tendue. (MB 20)

The fragrance of the earth does not enter this description but a similar visual image is created with the effects of light and sound enhancing the charm of the scene. The difference lies in Flaubert's preoccupation with texture and colour - the 'soie gorge-de-pigeon', 'la peau blanche de sa figure' and 'la moire tendue' of her parasol - all of which convey a sensuous, translucent kind of beauty. There is also more emphasis on light - the shimmering quality of the silk in the sunlight and the reflected light playing on her face. Joyce refers to light only in the 'diamonds' on the shrubs.

Joyce's scene comes alive through his use of metaphor and sharp, even humorous observation of the precise quality of what Stephen saw before him: the last drops of rain 'tarrying in clusters of diamonds'; the 'trim boots prattled' and the girls held their 'umbrellas at cunning angles.' The last two phrases provide an indirect characterisation of the girls themselves. The sensuousness of textures and fluidity of light do not enter Joyce's delineation of femininity.

2. (ii) Scents and their erotic and sophisticated associations

Scents are a feature often associated with Joyce's portrayal of girls and women. For instance, Eileen is symbolised by the fragrance of her warm breath. The children's party at Harold's Cross is over and they leave together:

> She had thrown a shawl about her and, as they went together towards the tram, sprays of her fresh warm breath flew gaily above her cowled head and her shoes tapped blithely on the glassy road. (PAYM 71)

Ten years later the same image comes back to him:

> He had written verses for her again after ten years. Ten years before she had worn her shawl cowlwise about her head, sending sprays of her warm breath into the night air, tapping her foot upon the glassy road. (PAYM 226)

The wording is slightly different but the same moment in experience, crystallised so many years before, appears again, creating a sense of unity in his own life and in the form of the story itself. 'Spray' immediately evokes an image of delicate stems of fragrant flowers as her breath shows up white in the frosty night air. The same lightness is repeated in the 'tapping' of her feet on the 'glassy' road - the shiny slippery surface of which makes her footsteps resound sharply. The synthesis of smell, sound and texture and the fact that she is well-covered by her shawl, creates an image of delicate, protected femininity, infinitely attractive to Stephen.

Erotic experience and desire are also described in terms of scent. Stephen pictures E.C. going home through the city:

> Vaguely first and then more sharply he smelt her body...Yes, it was her body he smelt, a wild and languid smell, the tepid limbs over which his music had flowed desirously and the secret soft linen upon which her flesh distilled odour and dew. (PAYM 238)

A strange coolness is conveyed by the use of 'tepid' and 'dew', as if their passion now belonged to the past. A very different image is presented in a previous allusion to the same relationship - then one of ecstatic joy which through his mind and senses came to be related to the flowing language of poetry:

> Her nakedness yielded to him, radiant, warm, odorous and lavish-limbed, enfolded him like a shining cloud, enfolded him like water with a liquid life; and like a cloud of vapour or like waters circumfluent in space the liquid letters of speech...flowed forth over his brain. (PAYM 227)

Scent plays a part in this description but in combination with light, warmth and all the sensuous connotations of flowing water which are identified with both erotic emotion and poetic expression.

Stephen at the age of sixteen felt irresistibly drawn to the sordid quarter of Dublin frequented by prostitutes. The sight and perfume of these women overcomes him:

> Women and girls dressed in long vivid gowns traversed the street from house to house. They were leisurely and perfumed. A trembling seized him and his eyes grew dim. (PAYM 103)

Their langorous movements and their scents have an erotic intention. Stephen at this period of his life equates perfume in its literal and metaphorical sense with women and sin. Even the names or materials of women's clothes convey the idea of something sinful:

> The names of articles of dress worn by women or of certain soft and delicate stuffs used in their making brought always to his mind a delicate and sinful perfume. (PAYM 158)

Scents or aromas are rarely associated with men in Joyce. One example is on the occasion of the school play at Belvedere when two of Stephen's school-mates tease him about Eileen. From a distance he had noticed 'a speck of pink light' in the darkness

> ...and as he walked towards it he became aware of a faint aromatic odour. (PAYM 77)

The two boys were smoking. This aroma was a form of characterisation: it conveys the sophistication and slight depravity of these two dandies for in Jesuit circles, smoking was considered a vice.

To return to the subject of women's scent, it is clear that both Joyce and Flaubert were aware of its erotic connotations, whether the natural aroma of the body or artificial perfumes worn by women. But there is a striking difference. For Joyce, feminine fragrance seems to have been part of a synthesis of sense-impressions of

which Stephen is aware and which he absorbs into his being as a total experience. But for Flaubert, it contributes to the characterisation of a woman or the atmosphere of her surroundings and is added rather as an afterthought - a final touch. For example, during the idyllic time spent by Frédéric and Rosanette in the forest of Fontainebleau, allusion is made to the sense-impressions of contrasting sounds, sound and silence, movement and the visual images presented by Rosanette's clothing and surroundings. All this is finally followed up by reference to the natural fragrance of her skin:

> Le sérieux de la forêt les gagnait; et ils avaient des heures de silence, où se laissant aller au bercement des ressorts, ils demeuraient comme engourdis dans une ivresse tranquille.... il l'écoutait parler pendant que les oiseaux gazouillaient, observait presque du même coup d'oeil les raisins noirs de sa capote et les baies des genévriers....et, quand il se penchait vers elle, <u>la fraîcheur de sa peau se mêlait</u> au grand parfum des bois. (ES 353)

How very different is this reference to the mingling of the unspecific '<u>fraîcheur</u> de sa peau' and the '<u>grand parfum</u> des bois' to Joyce's poetic expressions: '<u>sprays</u> of her fresh warm breath' and 'sending <u>sprays</u> of her warm breath into the night air'. The metaphorical use of 'spray' conjures up the fresh fragrance of flowers and also creates a visual image of her breath appearing as a white haze in the frosty air. With her shawl over her head, a moment in time has been caught as her footsteps

resound on the 'glassy road'. Whereas Flaubert builds up his scene through a series of contrasted sense-impressions, Joyce's form a single unit in which each element plays an equally important part.

There are further differences in Joyce's and Flaubert's treatment of this subject. The violent sexual attraction which women held for Stephen, and certainly Joyce himself, becomes apparent in his references to the very physical, almost animal quality of the smell of their bodies, in his descriptions of erotic experience:

> ...it was her body he smelt, a wild, languid smell... her flesh distilled odour and dew. (PAYM 238)

and

> Her nakedness yielded to him, radiant, warm, odorous... (PAYM 227)

For Frédéric and, as we may believe, for Flaubert himself, the attraction was to a sensuous type of beauty of which rich attire and sophisticated perfume were an integral part. Artificial perfumes on women carry associations of sin for Stephen - the prostitutes were 'leisurely and perfumed', whereas for Frédéric delicate scents symbolise the refined world of high society. The 'odeur indéfinissable' which he associates with Madame Dambreuse places her immediately in her sophisticated milieu.

We may try to draw some general conclusions about Frédéric's and Stephen's awareness of smell and the way in which this is expressed. Frédéric is receptive mostly to pleasant smells which he associates with commonly

acknowledged concepts such as feminine elegance, sophisticated 'salons', opulent homes and heavily scented fields and gardens. These are generally experienced while in a state of heightened perceptiveness due to his emotional condition[1] or the sensation of the moment.[2] Stephen is highly sensitive to smell by nature. He receives the sensory impact of odours, pleasant and unpleasant, and as an artist, tries to present them in their poetic form as part of the total impression they have conjured up in his mind.[3] I think we have here not only two different processes at work but two different kinds of consciousness.

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1. Cf. Section on Smell, p.217, (ref. ES 297)
2. Cf. Section on Smell, p.215, (ref. ES 31)
3. Cf. Section on Smell, p.310, (ref. PAYM 165-7)

(iii) Smells connected with city and domestic life

Certain odours help to characterise scenes in the home and other indoor scenes, ranging from the decent to the squalid. The Christmas dinner when Stephen was still at Clongowes presents a brilliant visual image of festivity, colour, warmth and plenty, impinging repeatedly on Stephen's mind. The picture of the red holly and green ivy twisted round the chandeliers is repeated in slightly different words at different points and added to. The cumulative effect can be seen when the dinner itself appears with its delicious aroma:

> ...the warm heavy smell of turkey and ham and celery rose from the plates and dishes and the great fire was banked high and red in the grate and the green ivy and red holly made you feel so happy and when dinner was ended the big plum pudding would be carried in,... (PAYM 31)

This is the only occasion when the pleasing smell of food is mentioned in A Portrait which seems strange considering Joyce's sensitivity to smells in general. In this passage, the aroma helps to emphasise the fact that this is the one and only richly laden table that stands out in Stephen's memory.

The Christmas scene is also an unusual one for Joyce in that colour plays such an important role. The motif of the red holly and green ivy appears three times in fairly close succession, the first time together with effects of light:

> There were lanterns in the hall of his father's house and ropes of green branches. There were holly and ivy round the pierglass and holly and ivy, green and red, twined round the chandeliers. There were red holly and green ivy round the old portraits on the walls. Holly and ivy for him and for Christmas. (PAYM 20-21)

The constant repetition and musical rhythm of the passage reminds one here of a Christmas carol.

The next allusion to the Christmas decorations takes in the light of the chandeliers once again and also the sensation of warmth from the fire:

> A great fire, banked high and red, flamed in the grate and under the ivy twined branches of the chandelier the Christmas table was spread. (PAYM 27)

In the third description, already quoted above, there is a synthesis of rich aromas, light and warmth from the fire and the visual image of the red and green evergreens. As the richly covered dinner-table in 'The Dead' is described in terms of brilliant colours, so this rare scene of plenty is similarly depicted, in striking contrast to the drab dimly-lit meals normally consisting of weak tea and dry crusts of bread common in Joyce's stories.

The rector's study at Clongowes has a particular aroma for Stephen, associated with the character of the rector himself:

> There was a skull on the desk and a strange solemn smell in the room like the old leather of chairs. (PAYM 57)

A smell can hardly be 'solemn' but Stephen, sensing the solemnity of the place, transfers his feeling even to the smell. His own mission - to complain of an unjust punishment - is also a solemn one. The synthesis of his own state of mind and the sensory impact of his surroundings is all contained in this expression.[1]

Unpleasant odours suggestive of squalor characterised various scenes in Stephen's past. They were not associated with home or school but with life in the city. Some boy had been found playing truant in the square, so he heard, where the water closets were:

> It was all thick slabs of slate and water trickled all day out of tiny pinholes and there was a queer smell of stale water there. And behind the door of one of the closets there was a drawing in red pencil of a bearded man in a Roman dress.... (PAYM 44)

The disagreeable smell and the visual image of trickling water and the drawing on the wall are clearly imprinted in the boy's memory, as is another squalid scene he met on the way to Confession:

> ....the common accents, the burning gasjets in the shops, odours of fish and spirits and wet sawdust, moving men and women. An old woman was about to cross the street, an oilcan in her hand. He bent down and asked her was there a chapel near....as she held out her reeking withered hand under its fringe of shawl, he bent over towards her, saddened and soothed by her voice. (PAYM 144)

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1. Cf. supra pp.259-61, for discussion of the emotive quality of epithets.

The common city life with its jarring sounds, constant movement, pungent odours and, in particular, the repulsive qualities of the 'reeking withered hand' of the old woman appear juxtaposed to the tranquil, dark fragrance of the chapel, remote from life - a refuge for his guilty soul:

> The candles on the high altar had been extinguished but the fragrance of incense still floated down the dim nave...He approached timidly...thankful for the peace and silence and fragrant shadow of the church. (PAYM 145)

The smell of incense with all its religious associations intensifies the sense of purity and peace.

(iv) Smells associated with the church, religious services, etc.

The scene in chapel above[1] reminds one of other such scenes in this book, characterised by smells that are associated with religious services of various kinds. As Stephen goes into school-chapel and the service starts, the cold night air and the smell of the chapel mingle and awaken a series of other thoughts and sense-impressions in the boy's mind:

> There was a cold night smell in the chapel. But it was a holy smell. It was not like the smell of the old peasants who knelt at the back of the chapel at Sunday mass. That was a smell of air and rain and turf and corduroy. But they were very holy peasants.... They lived in Clane, a fellow said: there were little cottages there and he had seen a woman standing at the halfdoor of a cottage with a child in her arms.... It would be lovely to sleep for one night in that cottage before the fire of smoking turf, in the dark lit by the fire, in the warm dark, breathing the smell of the peasants, air and rain and turf and corduroy. But O, the road there between the trees was dark! You would be lost in the dark. It made him afraid to think of how it was. (PAYM 18)

The characteristic aroma of the chapel reminds him of the chapel at home, and the peasants at mass, smelling of the countryside and their toil. This leads on to the visual image of a warm, dark cottage with a turf fire burning, welcoming him, and the dark road set between trees outside. The warmth and homeliness of the cottage and the natural, human smell he associates with the peasants are contrasted with the frightening darkness of the unknown without. Repetition of 'the smell of air and

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1. Ref. PAYM 42,

145

rain and turf and corduroy' emphasises this characterisation which combines the idea of life close to the elements and working in rough clothes in the fields. Repetition of a phrase within a single paragraph also brings in an element of poetry.

The same image, of the peasants and their turf fires, in slightly different working, crops up when Stephen imagines going home for the holidays:

> Through Clane they drove, cheering and cheered. The peasant women stood at the halfdoors, the men stood here and there. The lovely smell there was in the wintry air: the smell of Clane: rain and wintry air and turf smouldering and corduroy. (PAYM 20)

Repetition of 'wintry air' intensifies the sense of cold, but the predominant sense-impression is of smell.

The time comes when Stephen, unrepentant in his sinfulness, views these same old peasants in a different light:

> A cold lucid indifference reigned in his soul. At his first violent sin he had felt a wave of vitality pass out of him... On Sunday mornings as he passed the churchdoor he glanced coldly at the worshippers ... Their dull piety and the sickly smell of the cheap hairoil with which they had anointed their heads repelled him from the altar they prayed at.. (PAYM 106-7)

As a small boy, Stephens remembers taking part in a procession to a little altar in the woods:

> A strange and holy place. The boy that held the censer had swung it [and the charcoal] had burned quietly... and had given off a weak sour smell... the rector had put a spoonful of incense in it and it had hissed on the red coals. (PAYM 42)

The exactitude with which he conjures up this incident illustrates the very great sensitivity to smell that Joyce himself had, for as is pointed out in the final Conclusion[1], the sensory impact of life on a character can hardly be other than the author's own experience of sense-impressions.

The smell of the Communion wine not only reminds Stephen of his First Communion but also brings a host of associated thoughts:

> ...when the rector had stooped down... he had smelt a faint winy smell off the rector's breath after the wine of the mass. The word was beautiful: wine. It made you think of dark purple because the grapes were dark purple that grew in Greece outside houses like white temples. But the faint smell of the rector's breath had made him feel a sick feeling on the morning of his first communion. The day of your first communion was the happiest day of your life. And once a lot of generals had asked Napoleon what was the happiest day of his life. They thought he would say the day he won some great battle...But he said: - Gentlemen, the happiest day of my life was the day on which I made my first holy communion. (PAYM 48)

The sense-impression of smell brings to his mind the pleasing sound of the word 'wine'. It is the attraction of the sound of the word, like a melody, that has a particular meaning for him, just as the sound of 'Tower of Ivory' had a fascination for him, irrespective of its sense.[2] Here he feels the word 'wine' to be 'beautiful', conjuring up as it does, the deep purple of the grapes outside the white Greek houses.

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1. See infra, pp. 455-6

2. For further reference see pp. 269-70.

Repetition of the sense-impression brings with it another kind of association for him - an abstract one relating to Napoleon. The progression from the direct sensual impact of an experience to trains of thought related to other sense impressions or abstract ideas has been noted frequently in Joyce's work and is one of his most characteristic features.[1]

The notion of hell is described in terms of the senses and becomes real to Stephen through the sermon delivered by the rector at Belvedere in a storm of rhetoric. Eternal suffering is represented first in its physical aspects through torture of the senses:

> Every sense of the flesh is tortured and every faculty of the soul therewith: the eyes with impenetrable utter darkness, the nose with noisesome odours, the ears with yells and howls and execrations, the taste with foul matter, leprous corruption, nameless suffocating filth, the touch with redhot goads and spikes, with cruel tongues of flame. (PAYM 125)

The senses of sight, smell, hearing, taste and touch are all made to suffer for eternity. The horror of the prison of hell:

> ...is increased by its awful stench. All the filth of the world, all the offal and scum of the world, we are told, shall run there as to a vast reeking sewer....The brimstone, too,.. fills all hell with its intolerable stench; and the bodies of the damned themselves exhale... a pestilential odour....And then imagine this sickening stench, multiplied a millionfold and a millionfold again from the millions upon millions of fetid carcasses massed together in the reeking darkness, a huge and rotting human fungus. (PAYM 123-4)

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1. See p. 263, PAYM 7
   p. 264, PAYM 10
   p. 265, PAYM 22
   pp. 267-8, PAYM 17 and 17-8.
   p. 325, PAYM 18.

One wonders whether in the history of literature the horror of nauseating odours has ever been described more convincingly or at more length.

Stephen himself has a nightmarish vision of hell as his conscience weighs on him for the carnal sins he has committed. A clear image appears before him, intensified by the effect of smell, light and movement. The stench is so real to him that he is physically sick:

> A faint marshlight struggling upwards from all the ordure through the bristling greygreen weeds. An evil smell, faint and foul as the light, curled upwards sluggishly out of the canisters and from the stale crusted dung.... God had allowed him to see the hell reserved for his sins: stinking, bestial, malignant....
>
> He sprang from the bed, the reeking odour pouring down his throat, clogging and revolting his entrails....and clasping his cold forehead wildly, he vomited profusely in agony. (PAYM 141-142)

The disgusting scene is a synthesis of sense-impressions which has been discussed already in more detail, in connection with movement,

It is a medically established fact that language is strikingly deficient in words to describe the exact nature of particular smells. This was proved in a London hospital where patients' olfactory nerves had been damaged and they were completely incapable of explaining which types of odour they could not smell. This fact may help to explain why Flaubert refers so often to the general terms 'arôme' and 'parfum' and Joyce to 'fragrance' and 'odour'. But as I have pointed out above in comparisons of Flaubert's and Joyce's treatment of the subject,[1] while

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1. Cf. reference on pp.317-9.

Flaubert's terms remain undefined and contribute to creating atmosphere, Joyce's are an integral part of a synthesis of sense-impressions, crystallising a moment in time.

Another interesting point has arisen in the very recent past, on the biological front, which may also throw some light (even if a comic one!) on our subject. Apparently, according to research, there is 'an enormous difference between men and women in the ability to detect musk-like smells. Women are some 1,000 times more sensitive to them...Musk-like smells are the base of many expensive perfumes; the assumption that they are alluring to men could well be a female illusion.'[1] If this is so, could it not explain why Flaubert, aware as he is of all kinds of sense-impressions is relatively unaware of scents in the sophisticated world he is portraying? Women's perfumes are either referred to as 'indéfinissable' or described in very conventional terms, such as the 'odeur patchouli' of Mlle. Vatnaz and the 'odeur de vanille et de citron' of Rodolphe and the vicomte. Could it not also explain why Joyce never specifically mentions any artificial perfume whatsoever?

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1. Bryan Silcock, 'The sour smells behind your sex appeal'. Spectrum, The Sunday Times, 25.9.77.

PART III

VIRGINIA WOOLF

An outstanding quality of Virginia Woolf's writing is the apparent ease with which she moves between past and present, between the inner world of thought, feeling and intuition and the exterior world of nature, between city life and sophisticated social circles. This she does through a concentrated building up of visual impressions, thoughts and feelings of a very individual kind, the one merging into the other often without any transition. She creates a world full of evanescent light, filmy, gauze-like textures, brilliant colours and fluctuating movement, both in the physical and emotional sense. The lack of mental stability which she suffered from, is reflected in the impression of constant flux which she creates in her writings and which she herself felt to be an integral part of life.

It would follow naturally that the type of sense-impressions which appear in her work cannot be so easily defined as was the case with Flaubert, and to a lesser extent with Joyce. The transition from the sense-impression to a series of thoughts or memories of the past or to an image or symbol is often so abrupt that it is hard to say which is the predominant idea to be conveyed. Sometimes the process is reversed - an abstract concept leads to a visual image or some type of sense-impression.

There are also occasions where a synthesis of sense-impressions, all interdependent, helps to crystallise a moment in human experience, as is so often the case with Joyce.

In the course of the analysis it becomes apparent that many of her techniques continue through from the earlier, simpler works to the later, more highly stylized, complex ones. The culmination of her artistic development can be seen in The Waves where there is extensive patterning of motifs and symbols. For this reason I have not separated the analysis into the earlier and later texts but have tried to trace her awareness of sense-impression and her methods of expressing them, through the consecutive works.

For the purpose of the analysis, I have imposed artificial divisions such as Texture, Sound, Movement and so on, though it is very much a matter of personal interpretation as to whether a given sense-impression or concept belongs to one category rather than another. To take the term 'ripple' for example, which occurs with great frequency in Virginia Woolf's work, it immediately conveys a quality of movement associated with water, but we see it used to characterise widely varying subjects - from the abstract concepts of rapture and of news spreading, to the supple movement of a girl's body, fluctuations of light, the surface of waves blown in the breeze and a horse's muscles moving as he gallops. The term 'ripple'

could as easily be placed in the section on Light, as in that on Movement. When there is a synthesis of sense-impressions I have divided them into categories, as was the case in the analysis of Joyce's work, according to which seems to be the predominant one, and have analysed it together with the subsidiary ones.

TEXTURE

The stylish elegance of the life of English high society, whether in their country residences or in the upper-class areas of London, is something that Virginia Woolf was very well acquainted with from the time of her childhood and right through her adult life. It is also something she portrays with wonderful exactitude in Mrs. Dalloway particularly, and also to a lesser extent in Jacob's Room. The refinement and elegance of society life were obviously to her taste, but the shallowness that often went with it, was not. In some instances, parallels can be drawn between Virginia Woolf's art of portraying these types of scene and Flaubert's. They both show a liking for the sophisticated and opulent and portray it through selective and suggestive use of language. The basic differences, I think, lie in the fact that Flaubert scarcely ever comments on what is going on, while Virginia Woolf often does, in her concentrated use of sense-impressions and imagery to symbolise abstract concepts, and in a far less literal and peculiarly individual use of language.

The sections have been divided as follows:

(i) Texture and colour

(ii) Texture and colour in connection with flowers

(iii) Texture, colour and imagery

Appendix: Colour with particular reference to yellow

1. Texture and colour

We may take first some scenes connected with girls' and women's clothing and some upper-class homes which exemplify the life of high society and give some wonderful views of London's West End. Peter Walsh, who had once been in love with Clarissa Dalloway, now just back from India, is walking in the region of Trafalgar Square and catches sight of an attractive young woman. He follows her out of curiosity:

> ....On and on she went, across Piccadilly, and up Regent Street, ahead of him, her cloak, her gloves, her shoulders combining with the fringes and the laces and the feather boas in the windows to make the spirit of fiery and whimsy which dwindled out of the shops on to the pavement, as the light of a lamp goes wavering at night over hedges in the dark. (MD 49)

Details of her clothing combine in his mind with the elegance and extravagance of 'laces' and 'feather-boas' in the shop window to create an impression of fanciful, feminine refinement, so attractive to Peter. The simile of a light 'wavering over hedges in the dark' is an unusual one in the context, emphasising the striking quality of these rich textures as they flow out into the otherwise drab street. The motif of feathers with their connotations of weightlessness and softness, is a favourite one of Virginia Woolf's and one we shall note in connection with a variety of topics.[1]

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1. For further references to the motif of feathers and plumes see particularly: MD: 21,23,50,78,91,118,145,213
TL: 222
W : 23

A fleeting image of elegance in another young woman catches Peter's eye as she gets out of a car. Smooth movement also characterises this scene:

> ...Sweeping and swerving, accurately, punctually, noiselessly, there, precisely at the right instant, the motor car stopped at the door. The girl, silk-stockinged, feathered, evanescent, but not to him particularly attractive (for he had had his fling), alighted. Admirable butlers, tawny chow dogs, halls laid in black and white lozenges with white blinds blowing, Peter saw through the opened door and approved of. (MD 50)

'Evanescent' in this context is conveying Virginia Woolf's feeling about this picture of femininity - perhaps she wants to indicate the girl's youthful, ephemeral beauty and possibly, the speed with which she arrives, alights and disappears from sight. The terms 'silk-stockinged, feathered' suggest qualities which must have epitomised for Virginia Woolf the young lady of fashion for they are repeated in almost identical words in a description of Fanny Elmer in Jacob's Room:

> She wore silk stockings, and silver-buckled shoes, only the red feather in her hat drooped,... (JR 111)

Here again is the characteristic reference to feathers. The same terms 'feathery' and 'evanescent' are also used to describe the qualities Lily Briscoe, in To the Lighthouse, is trying to convey in her painting:

> Beautiful and bright it should be on the surface, feathery and evanescent, (TL 198)

It is interesting to see how these two textures are so much a part of Virginia Woolf's consciousness that they appear in her writing both in the characterisation of an elegant young woman and in the actual texture of a painting.[1]

Returning to the first quotation from Mrs. Dalloway, an interesting comparison can be drawn between this elegant young woman and another one, in L'Éducation sentimentale, whom Frédéric catches a glimpse of as she enters her carriage. Her sophistication is indicated by certain touches rather than by direct description:

> Il n'apercevait que son dos, couvert d'une mante violette... il s'échappait de cette petite boîte capitonnée un parfum d'iris, et comme une vague senteur d'élégances féminines. (ES 37-8)

Perfume certainly plays a part in this characterisation, a quality hardly ever referred to in Virginia Woolf's descriptions of women, but the general visual impression is created through the image of 'son dos couvert d'une mante violette', and a far more literal use of language can be noted.

A few details, characteristic of a wealthy home, indicate the scene Peter glimpses as the young lady enters. The restrained colours and mention of 'admirable butlers' also remind one of settings for parties in L'Éducation

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1. See infrapp.408-10 for discussion of Lily Briscoe's work.

<u>sentimentale</u>, but there is a difference. Virginia Woolf imposes herself by commenting on Peter's reactions - the girl, we are told, was not particularly attractive to him as 'he had had his fling', and the grand interior 'Peter saw through the opened doors and approved of.' With Flaubert, we are presented with a scene of brilliant light and texture and are left to imagine the viewer's reactions. Another difference lies in the fact that Virginia Woolf's synthesis of sense-impressions of movement, texture and colour in this particular case, leads to an abstract concept - Peter's meditations on English civilisation. In Flaubert, sense-impressions are part of the sequence of events.

Another scene in which touches are suggestive of grandeur in a context comparable with the one just quoted from Flaubert, can be seen at the beginning of <u>Mrs Dalloway</u> when passers-by, who stare at a car parked in Bond Street:

> ...had just time to see a face of the very greatest importance against the <u>dove-grey upholstery</u>, before a male hand drew the blind and there <u>was nothing to be seen except a square of dove-grey</u>. (MD 14)

Vague mention of a face and a male hand drawing the blind, coupled with the repetition of the 'dove-grey' of both the upholstery and the blind - the epitome of discreet good taste - are enough to create the aura of an important personage, rather as 'une vague senteur d'élégances féminines' conveyed the essence of feminine sophistication.

An evening scene as Peter makes his way towards Westminster, also evokes an air of dignity and opulence by means of a few indications of texture, colour and movement:

> Doors were being opened here by a footman to let issue a high-stepping old dame in buckled shoes, with three purple ostrich feathers in her hair. Doors were being opened for ladies wrapped like mummies in shawls with bright flowers on them... And in respectable quarters..., lightly swathed, with combs in their hair..., women came; men waited for them, with their coats blowing open, and the motor started.
> (MD 145)

We again note the ostrich feathers, implying elegance, and there is a sense of constant motion as doors are repeatedly opened and ladies descend. The ostrich feathers also suggest the opulence of the high society and are reminiscent of a very scathing picture of the wife of Sir William Bradshaw, the nerve specialist. Here ostrich feathers almost symbolise the class of wealthy, unquestioningly self-assured people who dominate the less privileged and less well-balanced. Virginia must have had in mind her own unfortunate experience with doctors and specialists when she was in her insane periods. In Mrs Dalloway when Septimus and Rezia pay a visit to Sir William Bradshaw they are told that:

> ...Sir William was master of his own actions, which the patient was not. There some... questioned...life itself. Why live? they demanded. Sir William replied that life was good. Certainly Lady Bradshaw in ostrich feathers hung over the mantelpiece, and as for his income it was quite twelve thousand a year.
> (MD 90-1)

To return to the London evening scene, the movement of clothing is another interesting ingredient in the description. The men's coats blowing open is an observation made quite frequently and emphasises the casual, suave element in the well-dressed gentleman. We are told that Peter's:

> ... light overcoat blew open, (as) he stepped with indescribable idiosyncracy,... (MD 145)

Movement of clothing in general is an interesting feature in Virginia Woolf's writing, as it was in Flaubert's. Peter recalls how, in the days when he had been passionately in love with her, Clarissa had worn something '<u>floating</u>, white, crimson, so much in keeping with her spirit, her adventurousness'. The young lady he had recently followed through the streets was wearing a:

> ... <u>thin long cloak which the wind stirred</u> as she walked past Dent's shop in Cockspur Street, (and which) blew out with an enveloping kindness, a mournful tenderness, as of arms that would open and take the tired - (MD 48)

Peter feels the movement of the cloak as a symbol of arms held out to envelop him, but it is a 'thin long cloak' which blew out with a 'mournful tenderness'. There is no real warmth in this embrace.

A reference to the white gowns of choristers and churchmen in King's College, Cambridge again shows her feeling for movement and materials without inner substance:

> Look, as they pass into service, how airily the gowns blow out, as though nothing dense and corporeal were within... In what orderly procession they advance... young men rise in white gowns;... (JR 29)

The sense of the lack of substance is clearly brought out in this description and it is something very deep in Virginia Woolf's consciousness. We see it in her predilection for such light flimsy materials as gauze, the soft weightlessness of feathers, the translucent quality of flower petals and frequent allusions to the effect of light and movement on textures, making them appear as though 'nothing dense and corporeal were within'.

Flaubert also refers to the effects of movement on materials and clothing, but the connotations are far more sensuous and in many instances erotic, as seen in Emma's apron strings playing round her hips, the ribbons on Mme. Arnoux's hat fluttering in the breeze, or the ~~delicate and perpetual movement of~~ the red trimmings on ~~He~~ awning above her ~~her footwear~~. Joyce, whose poor eyesight made him far less receptive to colour, visible texture and light, was not attracted by the niceties of sophisticated clothing and scarcely ever refers to them as a means of characterisation. Movement, in this connection, is not a sense-impression that he was particularly aware of.

A further example characteristic of upper-class London life, occurs in the scene at Lady Bruton's lunch party. A world of refinement is conveyed through colour, texture and movement and the viewer's attitude to the proceedings is indicated:

> And so there began a soundless and exquisite passing to and fro through swing-doors of aproned white-capped maids, hand-maidens not of necessity, but adepts in a mystery or grand deception practised by hostesses in Mayfair... when... there rises... this profound illusion in the first place about the food - how it is not paid for; and then that the table spreads itself voluntarily with glass and silver, little mats, saucers of red fruit; films of brown cream mask turbot;... with the wine and the coffee (not paid for) rise jocund visions before musing eyes;... eyes now kindled to observe genially the beauty of the red carnations which Lady Bruton... had laid beside her plate,... (MD 93)

This description starts very much as the previous passage did, with the car drawing up 'punctually, noiselessly', with the 'soundless... passing to and fro' of maids. The tone of the scene is set first by this smooth, quiet, highly organised movement. A visual image of texture and colour is then presented in the richly laid table with its glass and silver, red fruit, the brown garnished turbot and the red carnations. What is particular to Virginia Woolf's description, by comparison with, for example, the equally rich table at la Vaubyessard in Madame Bovary is the observation made about this style of entertaining, which one feels to be less Peter's attitude than Virginia Woolf's own. The 'exquisite passing to and fro', 'this profound illusion' that the food 'is not paid for' 'the table spreads itself voluntarily' and 'the coffee (not paid for)' are all the rather ironic observations of a person standing detached from the scene and maybe even slightly envious of the apparent ease with which this feat of entertaining is carried out.

If we compare this lunch party with the dinner at la Vaubyessard, we find Emma obviously totally involved in the scene which has far more direct appeal to the senses:

> Emma se sentit, en entrant, enveloppée par un air chaud, mélange du parfum des fleurs et du beau linge, du fumet des viandes et de l'odeur des truffes. Les bougies des candélabres allongeaient des flammes sur les cloches d'argent; les cristaux à facettes, couverts d'une buée mate, se renvoyaient des rayons pâles;... et en bas de soie, en culotte courte, en cravate blanche, en jabot, grave comme un juge, le maître d'hôtel... faisait d'un coup de sa cuiller sauter pour vous le morceau qu'on choisissait. (MB 57)

Savoury odours, the scent of flowers and fine linen, the glinting light of silver-ware and crystal and the solemn bearing of the elegantly dressed head butler convey an atmosphere of luxury upon which Flaubert himself does not intrude.

The whole subject of parties was one which attracted Virginia Woolf, as we know from a comment made by her husband, Leonard Woolf in Downhill All the Way:

> The idea of a party always excited her, and in practice she was very sensitive to the actual mental and physical excitement of the party itself, the rise of temperature of mind and body, the ferment and fountain of noise.[1]

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1. Quoted in the Introduction to V. Woolf, Mrs. Dalloway's Party. A Short Story Sequence, Ed. S. McNichol, Hogarth Press, 1973, p.11.

In her own diary she also made an entry on this subject:

> But my present reflection is that people have any number of states of consciousness; and I should like to investigate the party consciousness, the frock consciousness etc.[1]

While working on Mrs. Dalloway she was acutely aware of this theme and it appears, not only as the climax to the novel, but is evident in various short stories which have been collected under the title of Mrs. Dalloway's Party:

> The seven fictional pieces... form a kind of mosaic which has behind it the inner logic of a psychological exploration induced by the particular situation and occasion of the party.[2]

Freshness and lightness in young girls' and women's clothing is another feature particular to Virginia Woolf's writing: it links up with her taste for the light, transparent, delicate texture of such things as flower-petals and butterflies' wings. As we know from her biography, collecting butterflies, moths and insects was a hobby that Virginia and her brothers and sister followed for many years. This may easily account for the predominance of these insects in her writing and her love of the gaudy colours of butterflies' wings.[3]

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1. AWD, April 27, 1925, p.75.

2. Introduction to V. Woolf, Mrs. Dalloway's Party, p.17.

3. Her nephew, Quentin Bell, informs us that:

> ... their father encouraged them to botanise as they walked; but..they preferred what they called 'bug-hunting'. This was an occupation that was begun unofficially and then... put on a regular footing with all the proper apparatus of nets, collecting boxes, setting boards, killing bottles, cabinets and works of reference. The Stephen children collected butterflies and moths for many years, in fact until they were quite grown up.
>
> (Quentin Bell, Virginia Woolf. A Biography, Vol.1, 1882-1912, Triad, Paladin, 1976, p.33)

Clarissa looks back over the years and remembers her love for Sally Seton. She herself had come down to dinner in a white frock. Sally was wearing

> ... pink gauze - was that possible? She 'seemed', anyhow, all light, glowing, like some bird or air ball that has flown in, attached itself for a moment to a bramble. (MD 32-3)

The light, translucent quality of the gauze accentuates the vision Clarissa has of Sally, charged as she is with emotion. The filmy quality of gauze is repeated in Jacob's Room where Clara Durrant, whom Jacob admires from a distance, appears in 'yellow gauze' and later:

> ...Mrs. Durrant got up and passed down the room, holding herself very straight, and the girls in yellow and blue and silver gauze followed her, and elderly Miss Eliot in her velvet; (JR 56)

These young girls appear as something delicate, virginal, almost without substance, while the elderly Miss Eliot is in the heavier, warmer velvet.

Gauze comes to be used to symbolise the feminine, luxurious, and dainty rather as silk symbolises the opulent and sensuous for Flaubert. Fanny Elmer, in love with Jacob, adores fine clothes and we see her ruminating before Evelina's shop window:

> How exquisite it was - that dress in Evelina's shop off Shaftesbury Avenue! It was four o'clock on a fine day early in April,.. Other girls in that very street sat over ledgers, or drew long threads wearily between silk and gauze,.... (JR 117)

There then follows a description of the shop window:

> In Evelina's shop off Shaftesbury Avenue the parts of a woman were shown separate... Twining round a pole in the middle was a feather boa. Ranged like the heads of malefactors on Temple Bar were hats - emerald and white, lightly wreathed or drooping beneath deep-dyed feathers. And on the carpet were her feet - pointed gold, or patent leather slashed with scarlet.
>
> Feasted upon by the eyes of women, the clothes by four o'clock were fly-blown like sugar cakes in a baker's window. (JR 118)

Feathers, brilliant colours - green, red and white and the shiny quality of gold, the patent leather shoes, create a scene of texture and colour which ends in an extraordinary image - the clothes feasted upon by the eyes of women are like iced cakes which flies have polluted, in a literal sense. As in some of Flaubert's imagery[1] the association seems to be too far-fetched, so here, though basically there is a point of comparison, 'flyblown', with its associations of staleness and even dirtiness, is hardly relevant to the elegant clothing displayed in Evelina's shop window which could not in any way have been altered or soiled by women's admiring eyes.

The above passage is also interesting from another point of view - a taste for the morbid which appears even in the midst of a description of delightful and luxurious attire. The different parts of the display in the shop window are referred to as dissociated parts of

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1. Cf. ES 308, pp. 75-6, note 1, and *supra*.

a woman's body and the hats on their stands are ranged like the 'heads of malefactors' on the spiked railings at Temple Bar. The comparison with fly-blown cakes is physically repellent. This facet of Virginia Woolf's sensibilities appears in connection with a variety of subjects. In a description of an agreeable and potentially happy scene, one is suddenly confronted with something disgusting.[1]

When it comes to The Waves, the same allusions crop up as in these last quotations - to patent-leather shoes, gauzes and silks. Here, however, they have become symbols of Jinny's coquetry. The years are passing but Jinny is not to be beaten:

> ... I too, with my little patent-leather shoes, my handkerchief that is but a film of gauze, my reddened lips and my finely pencilled eyebrows, march to victory with the band.
>
> Look how they show off clothes here even under ground in a perpetual radiance. They will not let the earth lie wormy and sodden. There are gauzes and silks illumined in glass cases and underclothes trimmed with a million close stitches of fine embroidery. Crimson, green, violet, they are dyed all colours. Think how they organise, roll out, smooth, dip in dyes and drive tunnels blasting the rock. Lifts rise and fall; trains stop, trains start... I am a native of this world,... I will powder my face and redden my lips... I will rise to the surface, standing erect with others in Piccadilly Circus... I still excite eagerness. I still feel the bowing of men in the street..... (W 166-7)

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1. For further references, see particularly: JR 22
W 63,167,185

Jinny's eye is caught by the gauzes and silks on display in the little shops in the Piccadilly Underground - materials which had symbolised dressmaking in Shaftesbury Avenue (JR 117). There is also the characteristic intrusion of the unsavoury and morbid in the midst of luxury: the radiance of these windows in the underground station keeps the 'wormy' ground at bay.[1] Virginia Woolf's technique is exemplified here in the fact that the sense-impressions of texture and colour lead on to Jinny's identification of herself with the incessant motion and excitement of London life.

A comparison can be drawn between Virginia Woolf's picture of feminine coquetry and radiance and a scene of feminine brilliance in Flaubert. The above passage with such touches as Jinny powdering her face and reddening her lips, her filmy handkerchief and the light and colour in the illuminated display-windows can be compared with similar touches in the description of elegant women at Mme. Dambreuse's party:

> ...les blanches scintillations des diamants,... les taches lumineuses des pierreries étalées sur les poitrines, et l'éclat doux des perles accompagnant les visages se mêlaient au miroitement des anneaux d'or, aux dentelles, à la poudre, aux plumes, au vermillon des petites bouches, à la nacre des dents. (ES 181)

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1. For further references see supra p.347 note (1)

Here are the same references to powder and red lips, but the brightness comes from many kinds of jewels and the varying qualities of light they reflect. An air of rich elegance is created through an accumulation of clearly defined visual images. Virginia Woolf's description also includes visual images but the brightness is not so much a literal one as a 'radiance' consisting of a fusion of light shed on brilliant colours and fine textures and Jinny's own sense of vitality and triumph.

So far, the descriptions of women's and girls' clothing, analysed from the point of view of texture and colour, have been taken almost entirely from Jacob's Room and Mrs. Dalloway. In these texts it was possible to take isolated examples and discuss them in their context. But as Virginia Woolf's techniques develop, a particular sense-impression which she may associate with a certain character in the novel becomes part of a synthesis symbolising the whole personality. In The Waves, for example, there are motifs running through the work, arising from an individual character's consciousness and reactions to the sensory world.

It seems that in To the Lighthouse, her pre-occupation was not so much with texture in relation to exterior appearances as with how it might be associated with a character's aims. Lily Briscoe, the artist, for instance, wanted her painting to be 'feathery and evanescent'.

A cogent example of the culmination of her technique as seen in the patterning of motifs, having as a base a particular sense-impression, can be found in the portrayal of Jinny in The Waves. Texture and colour form a kind of foundation from which her personality gradually evolves. She is a sensual creature; she loves finery and the glamour of the society lady's life. Even as a young girl she sees herself in burning colours:

> I should like a fiery dress, a yellow dress, a fulvous dress to wear in the evening. (W 17)

This picture of herself runs through her life, is added to and becomes, in a sense, part of her identity. At school she dreams again of being extraordinarily beautifully dressed:

> ...for winter I should like a thin dress shot with red threads that would gleam in the firelight. Then when the lamps were lit, I should put on my red dress and it would be thin as a veil and would wind about my body, and billow out as I came into the room, pirouetting. It would make a flower shape as I sank down, in the middle of the room, on a gilt chair. (W 28)

The original picture in her mind's eye has been expanded - the fiery colour of the material is the same, but there is now the filmy texture of the material shining in the light and her dancing movement as she enters the room and sits on the 'gilt chair'. The motif of the gilt chair becomes part of the image she creates for herself: after the thrill of winning her game of tennis, she speaks of it again:

> All is rippling, all is dancing; all is quickness and triumph. Only, when I have lain alone on the hard ground, watching you play your game, I begin to wish to be singled out;... to be called away by one person... who is attracted towards me, who cannot keep himself from me, but comes to where I sit on my gilt chair, with my frock billowing round me like a flower. (W 38-9)

She is an adolescent and her romantic dreams are beginning. In addition to the original motifs, the concept of wave-like movement in the term 'rippling' reverts to her picture of herself at the very beginning of the novel:

> I dance, I ripple, I am thrown over you like a net of light. (W 10)

She is recalling how she had kissed Louis in the garden. The term 'ripple', which Virginia Woolf is so fond of, has associations with the soft movement of water and reflected light, rather as 'onduler', a favourite term of Flaubert's, suggests much the same qualities.[1] The particular use of 'net' in this context, in connection with light, is most interesting and seems to link up with other references, as for example the figurative use of 'veil' in the passage below where 'the veils drop' between Jinny and her dancing partner. Other figurative and literal examples of this image of filmy, gauze-like material[2] include Louis' description of a London eating-house where:

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1. See supra, section on water-imagery, pp. 195-203.

2. For further references to figurative use of 'veil', 'gauze', etc., see section on Texture, colour and imagery, pp. 364-371.

> A meaty, vapourish smell of beef and mutton,...
> hangs down <u>like a damp net</u> (W 79)

and Susan's description of her domestic life where all is protected:

> <u>I have netted over strawberry beds and lettuce beds</u>, and stitched the pears and the plums into white bags to keep them safe from the wasps. <u>I have seen my sons and daughters, once netted over like fruit in their cots, break the meshes and walk with me</u>, taller than I am, casting shadows on the grass. (W 163)

This striking image is echoed, in slightly different words, in a previous allusion to Susan's maternal role where she sees herself as:

> ... all spun to a fine thread round the cradle, wrapping in a cocoon made of my own blood the delicate limbs of my baby. (W 146)

There is clearly a connection in Virginia Woolf's mind between the fine, transparent texture of nets and veils and the filmy, protective properties of a cocoon.

To return to Jinny - the years have passed by and she is now grown up and launched in London society - the occasions she has dreamt of are now reality. Texture, colour, light, movement, and now also sound, smell, taste, and the sense of heat and cold build up a synthesis, together with the initial motifs:

> ...night is beginning. I feel myself shining in the dark. <u>Silk is on my knee. My silk legs rub smoothly together. The stones of a necklace lie cold on my throat</u>... I am arrayed, I am prepared....
> .... People are arriving; they do not speak;... There is the swishing sound of cloaks falling in the hall. This is the prelude,... I am ready to join men and women on the stairs, my peers... Like lightning we look but do not soften or show signs of recognition. Our bodies communicate... I enter.

Continued...

> Here are gilt chairs...This is what I have dreamt; this is what I have foretold... I tread naturally on thick carpets. I slide easily on smooth-polished floors. I now begin to unfurl in this scent, in this radiance, as a fern when its curled leaves unfurl,...I take stock of this world. Among the lustrous green, pink, pearl-grey women stand upright the bodies of men. They are black and white;.. Their hands go fluttering to their ties...They are anxious to make a good impression... I am arch, gay, languid, melancholy by turns. I am rooted, but I flow. All gold, flowing that way, I say to this one, 'Come'. Rippling black, I say to that one 'No'. One...makes towards me. This is the most exciting moment I have ever known. I flutter. I ripple. I stream like a plant in the river,... He is here; he stands at my side.
>
> Now...I am carried off. We yield to this slow flood. We go in and out of this hesitating music.

After dancing, they take wine:

> Wine has a drastic, an astringent taste. I cannot help wincing as I drink. Scent and flowers, radiance and heat, are distilled to a fiery, to a yellow liquid... This is rapture; this is relief... The veils drop between us. I am admitted to the warmth and privacy of another soul. (W 86-89)

The intensity both of the writer's style and the experience described is amazing.[1] One sense-impression is heaped on another; one emotion on another, culminating in the feeling of complete harmony with another human being. It is one of the rare instances in Virginia Woolf's writing where one has a sense of complete joy.

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1. The Waves, in general, as Virginia Woolf tells us:

> ...is written at such high pressure that I can't take it up and read it through between tea and dinner. I can only write it for about one hour, from 10 to 11.30.
>
> (Q. Bell, Virginia Woolf, vol.II, p.156.)

Texture appears in Jinny's silk stockings, the 'thick carpets', the 'smooth-polished' floors; colour in the 'gilt chair' and in the men's and women's evening clothes: the men's 'black and white' and the women in 'Lustrous green, pink, pearl-grey'. Sound is suggested in the 'swishing' of cloaks and the dance music. Movement is interesting, where it is alluded to metaphorically - she feels herself 'unfurl' like a fern and in her power to attract she is 'all gold, flowing that way...Rippling black...I flutter. I ripple. I stream like a plant...' There is a complete synthesis here of metaphorical reference to light, colour and water imagery in the allusion to flow, stream, and the motif of 'ripple'. The image of 'scent and flowers, radiance and heat, ... distilled to a fiery, to a yellow liquid' is an extra-ordinarily skilful fusion of Jinny's reaction to scent, light and heat and their concentration, as it were, in the wine as she sees it glinting yellow in the reflected light.

At their final reunion at Hampton Court, Jinny's floating yellow scarf with its strawberry spots, which had once been a symbol of her power to attract, appears to Neville as 'moth-coloured'.[1] This suggests the passing of time - the vitality and brilliance have faded. As

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1. For further references to moths, see pp. 378-9, note (1)

Jinny says,

> After our fire... there is nothing left to put in lockets. (W 200)

Looking at these passages as a whole, we can see how, on the basis of the bright, filmy frocks Jinny imagines for herself as a young girl, Virginia Woolf builds up a whole personality to which the reader reacts instinctively rather than intellectually. Jinny's motifs are ones that appeal to the senses as visual images of texture or colour - the billowing filmy dress, the gilt chair, and the yellow scarf. Or they are related figuratively to supple movement and flashing light - 'all is ripple' - and she seems to radiate beams of light which 'ripple and flow and waver'.

(ii) Texture and colour in connection with flowers

Flowers appear, both in their literal and metaphorical sense, with great frequency. It is certainly the colour of flowers that appeals to the senses first, but for Virginia Woolf, their delicate texture and their decorative and ephemeral nature offered additional appeal. She seems to be aware of them in much the same way as she was aware of flitting, gaudy butterflies and young girls in gauzy, transparent frocks. There is something in her consciousness that responds to the intensely feminine, rather fragile, transient and decorative; even something bordering on a purely surface beauty. Her characterisations often lack human, physical associations - as she herself feared about her portrayal of Mrs. Dalloway:

> ... it may be too glittering and tinsely.[1]

The theme of the insubstantial runs all through her work, whether in her descriptions of pure flower-like feminine beauty, the swaying of curtains in the wind[2] or the terrifying sensation of falling into a void - of losing contact with solid reality.[3]

An outstanding and splendid description of flowers in Mrs. Dalloway - the scene at Mulberry's, the florist's - is discussed later in this work.[4]

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1. AWD, Monday, Oct. 15th., p.61.
2. For fuller discussion, see infra pp. 371-2.
3. See MD 21-2, W 22-3, infra, pp. 415-7.
4. See infra, pp. 375-9.

There are the occasional allusions to memories of gardens blossoming, fields full of wild flowers and to cut flowers as a table-decoration, but some of the most striking allusions are in the form of imagery. Clarissa's daughter Elizabeth, a rather enigmatic, withdrawn young girl, is repeatedly compared with a flower. This does not characterise her very deeply but suggests a pure, somewhat austere type of beauty. She had once been gay and humorous but at seventeen, even her mother could not understand her:

> ... she had become very serious; like a hyacinth sheathed in glossy green, with buds just tinted, a hyacinth which has had no sun. (MD 109)

There is no suggestion of human warmth- she is like a flower enclosed in its outer leaves which has not yet had a chance to blossom. The hyacinth motif is repeated later:

> People were beginning to compare her to poplar trees, early dawn, hyacinths, fawns, running water, and garden lilies; (MD 119-20)

Her gracefulness, youth and purity are spoken of here, but both flowers and trees are of a stiff, dignified type. At Clarissa's party, Willy Titcomb finds Elizabeth:

> ... like a poplar,... like a river;... like a hyacinth, (MD 167)

and Sally Seton sees her:

> ... like a lily,... a lily by the side of a pool. (MD 171)

Running through all these images is the motif of the hyacinth and the lily - flowers one usually thinks of as being white or blue, both cold colours. The lily is commonly a symbol of beauty and purity and the hyacinth, a Spring flower, is also associated with freshness and purity. The references to 'running water', 'river' and 'a lily by the side of a pool' reinforce the image of a personality which is aloof and cool. It is worth observing that although the hyacinth has an exquisite fragrance, there is no mention of scent here, and very rarely in connection with flowers elsewhere in Virginia Woolf's work. It was clearly not this quality in them that appealed to her, but their colour and texture.

Flowers, both real and artificial, as table-decorations, are often mentioned. In Mrs. Dalloway, Sally Seton shocked Aunt Helena when:

> ...[she] went out, picked hollyhocks, dahlias - all sorts of flowers that had never been seen together - cut their heads off and made them swim on the top of water in bowls. The effect was extraordinary - coming in to dinner in the sunset. (MD 31-2)

A whole introductory section in Jacob's Room is devoted to the subject of artificial flower decorations compared with fresh, natural ones:

> About this time a firm of merchants having dealings with the East put on the market little paper flowers which opened on touching water. As it was the custom also to use finger-bowls at the end of dinner, the new discovery was found of excellent service.

Continued....

> In these sheltered lakes the little coloured flowers swam and slid; surmounted smooth slippery waves, and sometimes foundered and lay like pebbles on the glass floor....
>
> It must not be thought, though, that they ousted the flowers of nature. Roses, lilies, carnations in particular, looked over the rims of vases and surveyed the bright lives and swift dooms of their artificial relations... But real flowers can never be dispensed with. If they could, human life would be a different affair altogether... (JR 80)

This quaint piece of information and the thoughts that follow illustrate again the important role that flowers play in Virginia Woolf's consciousness. One cannot help linking these references to flowers in water to the motif in The Waves of Rhoda's petals, described in the same metaphorical terms of boats on the waves:

> ... Here is Rhoda on the path rocking petals to and fro in her brown basin.
>
> All my ships are white.... I want white petals that float when I tip the basin up.. I will now rock the brown basin from side to side so that my ships may ride the waves. Some will founder.... One sails alone. That is my ship... They have scattered,... all except my ship which mounts the wave and sweeps before the gale.... (W 14-15)

She goes one stage further in identifying herself with the one petal that does not sink. This preoccupation with flowers, water and ships foundering is reminiscent of the theoretical work of Bachelard:

> L'eau est l'élément de la mort jeune et belle, de la mort fleurie.[1]

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1. G. Bachelard, L'Eau et les Rêves, Corti, 1963, pp.112-3.

He is referring to Shakespeare's Ophelia who, he says:

> ...pourra donc être pour nous le symbole du suicide féminin. Elle est vraiment une créature née pour mourir dans l'eau, elle y retrouve, comme dit Shakespeare, 'son propre élément' ...[1]

When Rhoda is in Spain, picking flowers on the cliff-top, the same thoughts of drowning pass through her mind:

> We launch out now over the precipice... Rippling small, rippling grey, the innumerable waves spread beneath us. We may sink and settle on the waves... The white petals will be darkened with sea water... Rolling me over the waves will shoulder me under. (W 177)

The association of flowers with drowning reminds one not only of Ophelia in Shakespeare's tragedy, but also of John Everett Millais' 'Ophelia', painted in 1851 - a stylised portrayal of Ophelia①, lying in the riverwith a bunch of flowers in her hands. One cannot help thinking also, not only of Rhoda's suicide (how, we are not told) but even more forcibly of Virginia Woolf's own. In March 1941, feeling that another period of insanity was approaching which she had not the strength to face, she drowned herself in the river Ouse. Her obsession with water - not so striking, perhaps, in these few references to floating flowers as in the mass of water imagery which will be discussed later - reached its inevitable conclusion.[2]

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1. Ibid., pp.112-3.

2. David Daiches comments at the end of an appreciation of Virginia Woolf:

   > It was a symbolic ending. All her life she had been fascinated by the problem of the flow of

Continued on following page...

In The Waves, a particular flower decoration on the dining table, on the two occasions when the friends meet, is seen as a symbol of themselves. Bernard takes on the role of narrator at this point:

> We have come together, at a particular time, to this particular spot. We are drawn into this communion by some deep, some common emotion. Shall we call it conveniently 'love'? Shall we say 'love of Percival' because Percival is going to India?
>
> No... We cannot attach the width and spread of our feelings to so small a mark. We have come together...to make one thing, not enduring - for, what endures? - but seen by many eyes simultaneously. There is a red carnation in that vase. A single flower as we sat here waiting, but now a seven-sided flower, many-petalled, red, puce, purple-shaded, stiff with silver-tinted leaves - a whole flower to which every eye brings its own contribution. (W 108)

It is an interesting passage in that it conveys the abstract concept of friendship through a visible symbol. The common feeling which has drawn them together is symbolised by this single flower. Under the eyes of the seven friends it too has become seven-sided. As they are separate individuals, united in their love, so the flower is many-petalled but one in its entirety.

After Percival's death, the friends meet again - the carnation is now six-sided:

Footnote 2 continued from previous page...

> time and its relation to experience. Her novels are full of images of flowing water and other symbols of the flux of life. ...When she united herself with the flux of experience by disappearing into the flowing waters of an English river, anyone.... would have understood why she chose to end her life in that way.
>
> D. Daiches, Virginia Woolf, Nicholson & Watson, 1945, p.146.

> ... the red carnation that stood in the vase on the table of the restaurant when we dined together with Percival, is become a six-sided flower; made of six lives.

The carnation is now associated with life and what these friends have made of it:

> Marriage, death, travel, friendship... town and country; children and all that; a many-sided substance cut out of this dark; a many-faceted flower. Let us stop for a moment; let us behold what we have made. (W 196)

This aspect of Virginia Woolf's technique - the initial visual image of the colour and stiffness of the carnation developing into a symbol of friendship and then life itself, is characteristic of her development as a writer. From the simpler descriptions and use of imagery in Jacob's Room and Mrs. Dalloway, she has moved on to a complex patterning of motifs and symbols.

(iii) Texture, colour and imagery

It is important to bear in mind that often the imagery in Virginia Woolf's work does not stand in an isolated context but is part of an entire scene, built up on the 'radial' rather than the 'linear' technique.[1] A particular scene in which colour, movement or light, as the case may be, predominates, imposes itself on the observer's consciousness, and from this central point there radiate, as it were, associated images, thoughts, other related scenes or even abstract concepts. The decision as to which category these passages may be placed in is consequently an arbitrary one, but where there is any striking imagery, I have put the whole passage in the relative section on imagery.

Most unexpectedly, there is a striking resemblance between certain types of imagery that appear in both Virginia Woolf and Flaubert - namely the association of natural phenomena with articles of women's clothing and objects connected with home life.[2] It would appear that though both writers appreciated the beauties of nature, the sophisticated world was more deeply embedded in their consciousness. We may take first some short passages in

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1. See Introduction pp. 53-4

2. Cf. supra, p.102 note 1 for reference to Flaubert's use of this type of imagery.

which this similarity with Flaubert's type of imagery occurs and then move on to longer passages which include other points of discussion.

In Between the Acts, before the play starts, trees are described as '... leaning graceful ... with black bracelets circling the silver bark...' (BA 77). The silver birches are being likened to women, the image of 'black bracelets' being the dark patterning of the bark.

In The Waves, Bernard and Jinny, as children, play under the currant-bushes:

> Let us now crawl,... under the canopy of the currant leaves, and tell stories... Let us take possession of our secret territory, which is lit by pendant currants like candelabra, shining red on one side, black on the other. (W 18)

Virginia Woolf's extraordinarily acute perception and fanciful imagination are well exemplified here.

Gauze and veils appear frequently in Virginia Woolf's descriptions of natural scenes. For instance, Mrs. Swithin in Between the Acts talks about the permanence of the countryside:

> ...."It'll be there", she nodded at the strip of gauze laid upon the distant fields, "when we're not." (BA 66)

She is referring, presumably, to a misty haze over the meadows.

In Mrs. Dalloway, as Elizabeth wanders round London enjoying the 'geniality, sisterhood, motherhood, brotherhood of the uproar':

> A puff of wind... blew a thin black veil over the sun and over the Strand. (MD 123)

The metaphorical use of veil here indicates most skilfully the simultaneous effect of clouds passing over the sun and shadows being cast over the Strand.

The filmy quality of gauze and veils links up with Virginia Woolf's taste for materials which are light, transparent and lacking substance. Another scene described in terms of gathering clouds likened to veils and the street lamps creating a 'gauzy' effect, can be seen in Jacob's Room when night has fallen in Athens:

> Obscuring the moon and altogether darkening the Acropolis the clouds passed from east to west. The clouds solidified; the vapours thickened; the trailing veils stayed and accumulated.
>
> It was dark now over Athens, except for gauzy red streaks where the streets ran; and the front of the Palace was cadaverous from electric light. (JR 155-6)

A rather alarming and morbid scene is presented - the clouds are described as 'vapours' which 'thickened', the street lighting appears as 'red streaks' evocative of blood, and shadows cast on the illuminated Palace

make it 'cadaverous'.[1] 'Gauzy' creates the impression of vaguely defined outlines of streets, once they have been lit up.

Towards the end of To the Lighthouse, various scenes are described figuratively - all associated with fine materials and women's clothing.[2] Lily looks out to sea where Mr. Ramsay, Cam and James are making for the lighthouse:

> A steamer far out at sea had drawn in the air a great scroll of smoke which stayed there curving and circling decoratively, as if the air were a fine gauze which held things and kept them softly in its mesh,... (TL 211)

The light reflected from the sea's surface made the body shine

> ... half transparent enveloped in a green cloak. (TL 212)

was Cam's thought, as she trailed her hand in the water.

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1. This gloomy view of Athens may well have been influenced by her own unfortunate visit to Greece with her sister and brothers in 1906, where both Vanessa and Thoby, her youngest brother, caught typhoid fever:

> It was an odd, anxious unhappy view of Greece. Virginia spent much of her time in an Athens hotel bedroom reading Mérimée and heating saucepans of goats' milk....

On their return to England, Vanessa recovered but Thoby whose sickness had first been wrongly diagnosed as malaria and treated as such, died not long afterwards. As Quentin Bell goes on to tell us:

> ... the Stephen family seems to have been unfortunate in its physicians.. Thoby passed from crisis to crisis; he became listless, weary and weak; all he had left at the end was the courage to die bravely.

(Q. Bell, Virginia Woolf. A Biography, Vol.I, Triad Paladin, 1976, p.110)

2. For further references to this feature, see TL 14, 150, 153, 159, 218.

And James's day-dreams, as he sits in the boat, carry him to a place where:

> ... all was blowing, all was growing; and over all those plates and bowls and tall brandishing red and yellow flowers a very thin yellow veil would be drawn, like a vine leaf, at night. (TL 215)

Apart from the metaphorical use of textures in these three quotations to convey a sense of translucent light, the two references to yellow, following close on each other in the last passage, are rather unexpected, but they must be expressing different tones of colour and kinds of light - the yellow in the day being clear and brilliant; the 'yellow veil' at night, a faint luminous haze. Throughout her writing, Virginia Woolf shows an almost obsessional preoccupation with yellow which, when examined from a scientific point of view, throws a revealing light on her psychological make-up.[1]

A further example of her taste for gauze can be found in an extended piece of imagery in which a hot London evening is likened to a woman changing into her finery:

> Since it was a very hot night and the paper boys went by with placards proclaiming in huge red letters that there was a heat-wave,... One might fancy that day, the London day, was just beginning. Like a woman who had slipped off her print dress and white apron to array herself in blue and pearls, the day changed,

Continued....

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1. For more detailed discussion see infra, pp. 382-3

> put off stuff, took gauze, changed to evening, and with the same sigh of exhilaration that a woman breathes, tumbling petticoats on the floor, it too shed dust, heat, colour; the traffic thinned; motor cars, tinkling, darting, succeeded the lumber of vans; and here and there among the thick foliage of the squares an intense light hung. (MD 143)

The oppressiveness of the hot night is repeated at the end of the description in the concept of the 'intense light' which 'hung' among the trees in the squares. In a piece of very characteristic imagery full of connotations of femininity and refined elegance, the London day is compared in clear visual terms to a lady changing from her working clothes into her evening apparel of 'blue and pearls' with a 'sigh of exhilaration' and her 'petticoats tumbling to the floor.' There is fusion of the light material she may well be wearing and the day which 'put off stuff, took gauze'. In this way the concept of the evening appearing fresh and revived after the dust and heat of the day is conveyed through a sense of transparent, filmy texture.

In all these examples it is interesting to note the frequency with which gauze and veils are referred to metaphorically, in much the same way as Flaubert took articles associated with the 'salon' to describe natural phenomena. There are, of course, obvious differences; we can take some examples of Flaubert's references to gauze to illustrate these. He uses it to express the quality of darkness contrasted with light in a room:

> ..... Un cercle lumineux,.. blanchissait le plafond, tandis que, dans les coins, l'ombre s'étendait comme des gazes noires superposées;... (ES 189)

In the same way he expresses the luminous quality of stone as water flows over it in the sunlight:

> Le soleil frappait la cascade; les blocs verdâtres du petit mur où l'eau coulait apparaissaient comme sous une gaze d'argent se déroulant toujours. (ES 275)

Gauze is clearly used to define a quality of transparency closely associated with the effects of light - in the one passage, set in contrast to the light reflected on the ceiling, in the other, depicting the silvery appearance of the stones as the sun glinted on the cascades of water. Light is the outstanding impression in these descriptions.

In Virginia Woolf's descriptions, however, gauze denotes a lack of substance, a light, airy quality which it is difficult to define precisely but which is associated with a sense of the ephemeral, whether it is used literally to describe young girls' frocks, or metaphorically for natural scenes. It can be noted that the imagery contributes a great deal to the emotional effect of the passage and presents a far more striking and imaginative picture than does Flaubert's imagery which, though conventional, reveals acute powers of observation.

We may now move on to some longer passages in which imagery also occurs but which illustrate other features of Virginia Woolf's writing. They are perhaps more particular to her style than the use of imagery described above.

Gauze is again referred to in metaphorical terms towards the end of Jacob's Room, as day dawns over central London. This passage is an example of the 'radial' approach to writing mentioned at the beginning of this section. The central idea is that of colour becoming visible as light grows stronger, but included in this general impression are park scenes, interiors, the movement of horses, the sound of trains and a certain amount of figurative language:

> ... colour returns; runs up the stalks of the grass; blows out into tulips and crocuses; solidly stripes the tree trunks; and fills the gauze of the air and the grasses and pools.
>
> The Bank of England emerges; and the Monument with its bristling head of golden hair; the dray horses crossing London Bridge show grey and strawberry and iron-coloured. There is a whir of wings as the suburban trains rush into the terminus. And the light mounts over the faces of all the tall blind houses, slides through a chink and paints the lustrous bellying crimson curtains; the green wine-glasses; the coffee cups; and the chairs standing askew. (JR 159)

We definitely see the painter at work here with his splashes of colour - first in the park where colour is implied in the grass, tulips and crocuses, then in buildings, shining golden in the sun, in the dray horses (perhaps the greys of the brewery wagons) and finally in the 'lustrous bellying crimson curtains'. The oncoming light which 'fills the gauze of the air and the grasses and pools' conveys a sense of the early morning haze, individual blades of dewy grass and pools reflecting light. All these are without any body and the term 'gauze' intensifies this

impression. Apart from the central theme of colour, our eyes are led to the movement of the dray horses crossing the river, the speedy suburban trains converging on the terminus and interiors of houses where we are given a glimpse of the remains of the previous night's dinners, with their wine-glasses, coffee cups and chairs left askew. Personification of the houses which are described as having faces and being tall and blind, gives yet another dimension to their appearance. We have a vision of tall, dark, gaunt old buildings with their blinds drawn and their inmates still asleep.

The 'bellying crimson curtains' are interesting in two aspects - in the red colour, which is repeated in The Waves in connection with curtains and blinds, and in the impression of something swollen and almost unpleasant which is conveyed by the term 'bellying'. In this context, the term does not evoke so much an image of sails blown out in the wind as of something associated with its derivation from 'belly'. If we look first at references to red curtains in the introductory passages to the sections of The Waves, we note them in descriptions of the home at various times of the day:

> ... the rising sun came in at the window, touching the red-edged curtain. (W 63)

and after mid-day:

> The blind hung red at the window's edge.... (W 141)

In the afternoon:

> The red curtains and the white blinds blew in and out, flapping against the edge of the window. (W 157)

One wonders if Virginia Woolf's taste for red curtains may not have been due to a childhood memory of her own home and a dining-room with red curtains. Blinds and curtains playing in the wind are something she seemed to be attracted to, presumably because there is no substance to the form they make as they move and also because, as one looks into a room from the outside, 'all within (is) dim and unsubstantial'. (W 6)

Curtains swelling is also a picture repeated in Jacob's Room though in this case more to describe movement in an otherwise empty room. It also acts as a kind of motif unifying his life in Cambridge and the London lodgings he left behind when he went to fight in the war from which he never returned. The empty room, a kind of symbol, is described in identical wording on each occasion:

> ... Listless is the air in an empty room, just swelling the curtain; the flowers in the jar shift. One fibre in the wicker armchair creaks, though no one sits there. (JR 37/172)

This quotation is in fact an excellent example of yet another feature of Virginia Woolf's writing and the difficulty one has in making an analysis based on separate categories. Movement, sound and a clear visual picture of the flowers in the jar and the wicker armchair creating a sense of melancholy, illustrate the fluidity of a style which combines so many types of sense-impressions to create a particular emotional reaction. Placing the passage in

one category of sense-impressions rather than another is completely arbitrary, for the total emotional impact on the reader is what is most important, rather than the separate components of the scene.

The term 'bellying' which was used to describe the crimson curtains in the early morning London scene in Jacob's Room links up with repeated references in The Waves to articles being 'swollen'. In each case there is something unnatural about the image presented, just as a swelling in any part of the human body denotes an abnormal or diseased condition. Before Susan goes to boarding-school, she tells us:

> I saw Florrie in the kitchen-garden... as we came back from our walk, with the washing blown out round her, the pyjamas, the drawers, the nightgowns blown tight. And Ernest kissed her... (W 20)

The physical aspect of this scene is repulsive to her and the image of the washing 'blown out hard' is fixed indelibly in her memory, as being somehow synonymous with the relationship of these two servants.[1] The same horror is felt by Rhoda, even when she is grown up.[2]

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1. Her horror of the sexual aspect of love may, in part, be put down to the amorous advances of her half-brother, George Duckworth, while she was still extremely young. He had even shown curiosity about her physical make-up when she was only six years old, the memory of which still made her 'shiver with shame' (V.W. to Ethyl Smyth, 12 January 1941). As Quentin Bell expressed this part of her girlhood experience:

> Eros came with a commotion of leathern wings, a figure of mawkish incestuous sexuality. Virginia felt that George had spoilt her life before it had fairly begun. Naturally shy in sexual matters, she was from this time terrified back into a posture of frozen and defensive panic.

(Q. Bell, Virginia Woolf, A Biography. Vol.I, 1882-1912, Triad Paladin, 1976, p.44.)

Footnote 2 continued on following page...

The term 'swollen' has again connotations of the unnatural and disgusting.

An interesting progression can be seen through the introductory passages in The Waves where the light shining in varying ways at different times of the day distorts objects and gives them the appearance of bulging or of being swollen. In the early hours of the day, there is little mention of the effects of light and shade on objects but at mid-day:

> The sun struck straight upon the house...
> Sharp-edged wedges of light lay upon...
> the bulge of a great bowl. (W 128)

'Bulge' has connotations of distortion,as does 'swollen'. Again in the afternoon:

> ... daggers of light fell upon chairs and tables.. The green pot bulged enormously, with its white window elongated in its side. (W 142)

As evening draws on:

> The evening sun,... made chairs and tables mellower... Here lay knife, fork and glass, but lengthened, swollen and made portentous. (W 179)

Finally, darkness is approaching:

> ...The light had faded... The precise brush stroke was swollen and lop-sided;.. (W 202-3)

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7 Footnote 2 continued from previous page...

As evening draws on, Rhoda observes how:

> ...cars begin to wink and flicker, coming down the avenue. Lovers can draw into the darkness now; the boles of the trees are swollen, are obscene with lovers. (W 185)

Compare also Neville's divided ideas on this subject, (W 193-4)

In all these passages, there is a sense of something strangely disproportionate in the terms 'bulge', 'swollen', 'elongated' and 'lop-sided'. The 'precise brush stroke' in the last quotation refers to the exact outline of objects which has been changed and blurred by the gathering darkness.

Another example of imagery as part of a total scene built up on the 'radial' technique with colour even more predominant as its centre point is an extraordinarily beautiful description of Clarissa's visit to Mulberry's, the florists of Bond Street. We are presented with a picture of the brilliant colour and sweet-smelling profusion of an English garden. There is, indeed, something essentially English in all Virginia Woolf's writing, much as there is something essentially Irish in Joyce's. Both built on their childhood memories, and refer constantly by name to particular streets, as in the above mention of Bond Street.[1] The mere name carries a host of associations for those who are familiar with London, but not for a complete stranger. She was evidently writing for an élite class, who would be acquainted with this sort of allusion.

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1. For reference to Joyce's allusions to street names, see supra pp. 254-5 note 1

Returning to Clarissa and her English blooms in Mulberry's:

> There were flowers: delphiniums, sweet peas, bunches of lilac; and carnations, masses of carnations. There were roses; there were irises. Ah yes - so she breathed in the earthy-garden sweet smells as she stood talking to Miss Pym who... thought... she looked older, this year, turning her head from side to side among the irises and roses and nodding tufts of lilac with her eyes half closed, snuffing..... the delicious scent, the exquisite coolness. And then, opening her eyes, how fresh, like frilled linen clean from a laundry laid in wicker trays, the roses looked; and dark and prim the red carnations, holding their heads up; and all the sweet peas spreading in their bowls, tinged violet, snow white, pale - as if it were the evening and girls in muslin frocks came out to pick sweet peas and roses after the superb summer's day, with its almost blue-black sky, its delphiniums, its carnations, its arum lilies, was over; and it was the moment between six and seven when every flower - roses, carnations, irises, lilac - glows; white, violet, red, deep orange; every flower seems to burn by itself, softly, purely in the misty beds; and how she loved the grey white moths spinning in and out, over the cherry pie, over the evening primroses! (MD 13-14)

Colour is indicated by inference at the outset, through the names of the flowers. Sweet scents are described and a striking piece of imagery then takes one by surprise:

> ... how fresh, like frilled linen clean from a laundry laid in wicker trays, the roses looked.

The freshness and orderliness of the roses arranged in the shop window reminds Clarissa, or more probably the author herself, for generally the two are interchangeable, of the crispness of freshly laundered, frilled linen, lying neatly in wicker containers. The 'frilled' edging

to the linen must presumably have had a parallel in her mind with the irregularly indented, delicate rose-petals. Virginia Woolf's extraordinarily retentive sensibilities make such images possible and also open up to the reader a vision of things that rejects the conventional and stereotyped.

Colour is now referred to directly in the sweet peas, 'tinged violet, snow-white, pale' which brings another scene to mind - girls in muslin frocks on a summer's evening who 'came out to pick sweet peas and roses'. The transparent, soft texture of muslin is reminiscent of Virginia Woolf's taste for gauze. The sky is now 'blue-black', the flowers previously described are referred to again and yet again - intensifying the sense of colourful profusion. It is almost overpowering. The colours in the evening light are glowing: 'white, violet, red, deep orange'. One has the impression that Clarissa is intoxicated with this scene - a fusion of reality and fancy or possibly memory, which builds up into a symphony of colour from the pinks, reds, blues, mauves and whites of the shop flowers to the evening garden scene[1] evoked by the paler tones of the sweet peas and finally the deep, rich reds and oranges as dusk comes on with its greyish

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1. For further references to evening garden scenes see:
   JR: 54
   TL: 22

white intangible mists and flitting moths.[1] Very much

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1. Moths had an enormous fascination for Virginia Woolf. While in one of her frequent periods of illness which she felt to be 'partly mystical', creative inspiration came to be identified directly with the moth image:

> I felt the spring beginning, and all the doors opening; and this is I believe the moth shaking its wings in me. I then begin to make up my story whatever it is; ideas rush in me; often though this is before I can control my mind or pen. (AWD. February 16, 1930, p.154)

A letter written to her by her sister, Vanessa Bell, (May 3, 1927) about a giant moth they caught one night, made such an impression on her that she promised to write a story about it. In her Collected Essays I, there appears 'The Death of the Moth', in which the phenomenon of death is exemplified in this 'insignificant little creature'...:

> As I looked at the dead moth, this minute wayside triumph of so great a force over so mean an antagonist filled me with wonder. Just as life had been strange a few minutes before, so death was now as strange. The moth having righted himself now lay most decently and uncomplainingly composed. O yes, he seemed to say, death is stronger than I am. (p.360-1)

As we know, her novel The Waves was first conceived under the title of The Moths. She saw it as a:

> ...play-poem idea, the idea of some continuous stream, not solely of human thought, but of the ship, the night etc., all flowing together; intersected by the arrival of the bright moths. (AWD. June 18, 1927, p.108)

As she worked on it, the moth image gradually becomes replaced by the waves:

> I think it will begin like this: dawn, the shells on the beach;... then all the children at a long table - lessons. ... Well, all sorts of characters are to be there... Then another person or figure must be selected. The unreal world must be round all this - the phantom waves. The Moth must come in; the beautiful single moth. Could one not get the waves to be heard all through? (AWD June 23, 1929, p.144)

Continued on following page...

as in a painter's canvas, daubs of different colours and tones compose this picture. There are other facets too: Clarissa breathing in the fragrance with the greatest delight, Miss Pym who finds her long-standing customer has aged, and finally the contrasting image of young girls picking flowers on a summer evening. The whole might be compared to a collage made up of a collection of pieces related to the central theme - brightly coloured flowers - but related through the flight of the imagination rather than logical thought.

Footnote 1 continued from previous page....

The 'single moth' was perhaps Percival - the figure that attracts all the characters yet never actually speaks in the novel.

For references to moths in the various novels, see particularly:

JR : 21, 54, 171

MD : 14

W : 12, 148, 151

For figurative use see:

JR : 70

W : 45, 157, 184, 200, 230, 253

APPENDIX

Colour with particular reference to yellow

Theories on the visual arts at the time when Virginia Woolf was writing, and her friendship with various painters in her circle, must undoubtedly have influenced her awareness of colour. Roger Fry's recognition of the Post-Impressionists and his introduction of them to the British public, amid howls of outrage, opened the way to a new kind of art where, as he wrote, 'skill was completely subordinated to the direct expression of feeling.'[1] This breaking away from the more conventional portrayal of reality in favour of a far more subjective interpretation was a movement which affected all the arts and, I think, accounts for many features in Virginia Woolf's work, among them her strange and often unexpected treatment of colour.

The waves of the sea appearing 'lemon' or 'purple', Jinny's feeling her body to be 'pink, yellow, brown', people's faces appearing 'red and yellow', are all expressions of colour-tones which evoke a particular sensation rather than produce a picture of anything we can equate with the physical world as we see it. The only

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1. Quoted in V. Woolf, Roger Fry: A Biography, Hogarth Press 1940, p. 177.

instances where clear and brilliant colour seems related to our concept of natural objects are in her descriptions of flowers, butterflies and gardens.

The most interesting aspect of this subject of colour in Virginia Woolf is the recurring reference to yellow. For a painter like Van Gogh, for example, yellow was a symbol of light and hence warmth and life - there is his yellow chair, his yellow room, yellow sunflowers and enormous yellow suns. But for Virginia Woolf, it was not this aspect, I think, that attracted her so much as a subconscious association in her mind with fire. This would explain her many references to a combination of yellow and red and also possibly to yellow and purple, though she may have associated the latter with the colours on butterfly wings.[1] These colours were, in fact, combinations of complementary colours. In the art world, some theories in the use of colour, involving complementary colours, at the end of the 19th century, may easily have influenced Virginia Woolf, through her association with painters of her time.[2]

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1. For references, see p. 390, note 1.

2. Some interesting aspects of the subject of colour appear in comments made by Georges Seurat in 1890, in a treatise on Art, and also by Paul Signac in 1899, in his theories about colour and technique. Seurat was particularly interested in the scientific study of colour and light and formulated methods for producing harmony through the analogy of contrary and of similar elements of tone, colour and line. As far as colours were concerned, he considered the contrary ones to the complementaries, i.e. red-green, orange-blue, yellow-violet. Paul Signac compared the Impressionists' and Neo-impressionists' approach to colour:

Continued on following page...

The average reader may interpret her taste for yellow and its combination with reds and purples, in these terms. For the psychiatrist, however, another and very fascinating subject opens up. One of the methods for analysing personality in normal and abnormal cases, is to present people with charts containing colours and combinations of colours. Depending on their reactions and particular preferences, certain conclusions can be drawn. One such test is known as the Lüscher Test, on the basis of which W. Furrer, a Swiss psychiatrist, has established certain hypotheses. As far as the colour yellow is concerned, those who show a definite predilection for it seem to have certain characteristics which coincide with our knowledge of Virginia Woolf's personality. Yellow is characterised in the following way:

> Gelb... strahlt und fliesst und findet keinen Halt (Lüscher). Dem ruhelosen flüchtigen Gelb fehlt jede Beständigkeit und Stete. Es ist in seiner extensiven Bewegung labil und veränderlich.....[1]

Footnote 2 continued from previous page...

By the elimination of all muddy mixtures, by the exclusive use of the optical mixture of pure colors, by a methodical divisionism and a strict observation of the scientific theory of colors, the neoimpressionist ensures a maximum of luminosity, of color intensity, and of harmony - a result that had never yet been obtained. (Source: Paul Signac, De Delacroix au néo-impressionisme, Paris, 1899, (pp. 87-88 in edition of 1921)

1. Yellow... shines and flows unceasingly. There is no constancy or steadiness in restless, volatile yellow. It is labile and changeable in its extensive movement. W. Furrer, Die Farbe in der Persönlichkeitsdiagnostik. Methodik und Anwendung des Lüscher-Testes in der Psychiatrie, Hermann Stratz, Säckingen und Brombach, 1953, p.33.

In general, there seems to be a tendency in normal cases to be disinclined to choose the colour yellow, while in abnormal ones, there is a pronounced tendency towards it. An excessive liking for yellow in certain personality types may show abnormality:

> Bei diesen Typen nimmt die Labilität, Unrast und Störbarkeit des affektiven Verhaltens derart überhand, dass sie nicht mehr zu einem normalen mitmenschlichen Kontakt fähig sind.[1]

The yellow-red combination is identified with instability, excitability, and irritability; the yellow-purple combination with excitability and over-sensitivity. It appears that, considered from a scientific point of view, all the qualities of instability, incessant activity and over-sensitivity could well be related to Virginia Woolf and might help to explain her excessive predilection for yellow and, maybe, also account for her pronounced taste for water-imagery with its connotations of ceaseless movement.

To illustrate the astonishing variety of objects described as being yellow, in her work, I have made a general survey in Jacob's Room and The Waves, where most examples seems to occur. It is not a complete list but includes the most striking references.

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1. In these cases lability (instability), restlessness, and irritability become so pronounced that these people are not capable of making normal human contact any more.
   Ibid., p.137.

Jacob's Room

Yellow is used to describe the following subjects:

Light with particular reference to:	page
the lighthouse	9
the sky	18,15
King's College Chapel windows	29
tunnels in the London Underground	64
Soho market at night	94
a window at night in a snow-scene	95
Great Russell St. in the rain at night	105
the Parthenon columns at sunset	144 (2), 158
people's faces lit up by bonfire	71 (red and yellow)

Objects associated with nature and the countryside:

flowers	20
butterflies	20,22
grapes	59
oranges	149
paths, pebbles	14,125,164

The sea: 45

Clothing:

girls' gauze frocks	55,56
women's boots	131
Sally Wentworth's outfit	141 (yellow & purple)
gentlemen's slippers	60
gentlemen's waistcoats	148

Miscellaneous:

teeth in a sheep's jaw	12,33
paper party decorations	72 (yellow and pink)
blinds	94 (yellow and pink)
novel?	111
globe in a travel agency	167
lettering on a hoarding	15

The Waves

It is interesting to note that yellow is used in this book to describe not only objects but also abstract concepts, the colour being equated with a sensation or state of mind. What Virginia Woolf was trying to convey in these latter instances is not always easy to grasp.

Yellow is used in the description of the following subjects:

Light with particular reference to:

	page
the sky	5,6 (yellow & purple)
awnings	52,126
the seashore	62
the square, in Cambridge, in the evening	73
lamps shining on ivy	86

Objects and places associated with nature and the countryside:

school playing-fields	30
excretions from slugs	63
bridge over the river Cam	70
crops	84
flowers	128,164
rocks	151
vine leaves	203
branches	217

People:

Percival's face	40	(yellow and red)
Faces Rhoda sees in Spain	177	(yellow and red)

Clothing:

Jinny's dream of a dress as a young girl	17	
Jinny's scarf	151	(yellow with strawberry spots)
	200	
Jinny's clothes	190	

Food and drink:

sandwiches	82	
wine	89	
fruit	114	
bread-rolls	121,250	

Miscellaneous:

a clock-face	16	
skirting	35	
a tin bath	182	
holes in sheets	177	
stains on the table-cloth	191,192	
a page of Catullus	44	
London buses	166	(yellow and red)

Abstract concepts:

Sensation: The yellow warmth in my side turned to stone...(Susan) 11

I feel my body...become pink, yellow, brown. (Jinny) 46

Continued...

Language: Those are <u>yellow</u> words, those are
fiery words,... (Jinny) 16

Human achievement: The <u>yellow</u> canopy of
our tremendous energy hangs
like a burning cloth above
our heads. Theatres, music-
halls and lamps in private
houses make that light.
(Bernard) 125

LIGHT

Light as a sense-impression occurs in combination with colour and movement most frequently and it is often difficult to make a sharp division and place scenes in fixed categories. Movement is sometimes seen as a physical action, such as a beam of light flashing over the sea, or as an image in a character's mind. With Septimus Warren Smith, for example, no positive distinction can be made between his sensation of the movement of falling and the actual rising and falling of objects round him. There are some parallels here with Flaubert's sensations of falling and his visions of swirling light.[1] Some comparisons can be made, also, between Virginia Woolf's treatment of certain city scenes and descriptions of the countryside ~~with~~ and some examples in Joyce's work.

The subject has been divided into the following sections:

1. Light and colour
2. Light, colour and movement

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1. See Introduction, pp.31-3, 60-1

Light and colour

If we look at some of Virginia Woolf's earlier works, there seem to be more references to light and colour in Jacob's Room than in Mrs. Dalloway. This may be due to the fact that scenes by the sea-shore while Jacob was young and the subsequent life of a highly intelligent and unusually handsome young man in Cambridge, London and Greece, are more fittingly described in terms of light and colour than the activities and memories of an ageing London hostess. There is, however, a characteristic scene of light and colour in Mrs. Dalloway that we may examine before going on to others in Jacob's Room. Lady Bruton has satisfactorily entertained her guests at a lunch-party and reclines afterwards on a sofa. Her drowsy, heavy state becomes identified with her memories of her young days in Devonshire, so that she felt like:

> ... a field of clover in the sunshine this hot June day with the bees going round and round and about and the yellow butterflies. Always she went back to those fields down in Devonshire.... (MD 99)

Sunlight and the yellow butterflies which one immediately associates with fluttering movement, contribute to this lyrical summer country scene. The colour yellow seems to have been almost an obsession with Virginia Woolf.[1]

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1. See section on yellow, pp. 380-387,

The butterfly motif was also a favourite one.[1] In fact, the clear, pure yellow she is so fond of is a colour rarely met in nature except in butterflies and flowers.

If we look at the beginning of Jacob's Room, there is a scene by the sea-shore with Betty Flanders, Jacob's mother, trying to hurry her children home in the evening. A storm seems to be brewing:

> The wind was rising. The waves showed that uneasiness, like something alive, restive, expecting the ship, of waves before a storm. A pale yellow light shot across the purple sea, and shut. The lighthouse was lit... The sun blazed in their faces and gilded the great blackberries trembling out from the hedge...
>
> 'Don't lag, boys. You've got nothing to change into,' said Betty, pulling them along, and looking with uneasy emotion at the earth displayed so luridly, with sudden sparks of light from greenhouses in gardens, with a sort of yellow and black mutability, against this blazing sunset, this astonishing agitation and vitality of colour which stirred Betty Flanders and made her think of responsibility and danger. (JR 9)

It is an ominous, oppressive scene of yellow, purple and black and different qualities of light - shafts of 'pale yellow light' which flash intermittently from the lighthouse, the blazing light of the sunset which 'shone'

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1. For further references to butterflies see particularly:

   JR: 20,21,22,34,51

   MD: 133

   TL: 56

   W : 9,39

   For figurative use see:

   W: 18,38

   See also supra p. 344 note 3 for biographical details.

in their faces and 'gilded' the blackberries, and sudden 'sparks' of light reflected from greenhouses. These brilliant flashes and changing colours arouse an inexplicable sense of apprehension in Betty - she terms it a feeling of 'responsibility and danger'. The sea appearing purple is a poet's or an artist's image, intensifying the oppressive quality of the scene. The way in which the colours yellow and purple follow so closely on each other is also reminiscent of other such combinations: 'the yellow and purple bunches' of grapes which Clara Durrant picks from the vine (JR 59); Sally Wentworth's dress in Athens, 'sandy-yellow with purple spots on it' (JR 141); the yellow and purple in the dish of fruit set in the middle of the Ramsays' dinner table (TL 113,127), and 'a slab of pale yellow.....spreading until it meets a purple stripe' (W6). One wonders if there is a reason for this recurrent combination of colours - could she have seen them in butterfly wings?[1]

An interesting parallel can be seen in the quality of reflected light and movement in the description of the sun gilding the 'great blackberries <u>trembling out</u> from the hedge' and an instance of 'trembler' in Flaubert's work.[2] 'Trembling out' suggests the weight of these blackberries on their thin stalks growing out from the hedge and reflecting the burning evening sun. The same fine observation can be seen in <u>Madame Bovary</u> where Emma is dressing for the ball at la Vaubyessard:

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1. See supra p. 344 note 3 and section on yellow, supra pp. 381-387.

2. For further references to 'tremble' and 'quiver' in connection with scenes in nature, see particularly: W: 31, 48, 86, 144. For use in imagery see: W:45.

> Ses bandeaux, doucement bombés vers les oreilles, luisaient d'un éclat bleu; une rose à son chignon tremblait sur une tige mobile, avec des gouttes factices au bout de ses feuilles. (MB 58-9)

The same kind of top-heavy impression is conveyed by the use of 'tremblait' to describe the slight movement of the rose on its delicate stem, set in her shining black hair. The sense-impressions of colour, light and movement are used to their fullest effect in these two succinct passages. Virginia Woolf's is a far more forceful image, however, due to the particular use of the preposition 'out' following the verb 'trembling'. The use of the French 'tremblait' is fairly conventional in this context.

If we examine some descriptions of light and colour in Jacob's Room, we find that Virginia Woolf appears to have had an unusually keen awareness of colours - not the muted shades and contrasting light and dark that appealed to Flaubert nor the greyish misty colours dotted with pale light characteristic of Joyce, but the brilliant, unmixed colours of the artist's palette - red, mauves, greens, blues, whites, blacks and particularly yellows. That her sister Vanessa was an artist and that she lived in close touch with other artists of the Bloomsbury set such as Duncan Grant and Roger Fry, may partly account for this.[1] It may also be that, over-aware and over-sensitive as she was, it was those striking, unrestful colours that caught her attention

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1. See Introduction, pp.50-2

rather than the subtler, quieter ones. Perhaps she felt the 'astonishing agitation and vitality of colour' as Betty Flanders did.

A striking example of light and colour occurs in the description of King's College Chapel, Cambridge:

> They say the sky is the same everywhere... But above Cambridge - anyhow above the roof of King's College Chapel - there is a difference.... Is it fanciful to suppose the sky, washed into the crevices of King's College Chapel, lighter, thinner, more sparkling than the sky elsewhere? Does Cambridge burn not only into the night, but into the day?

She then goes on to describe the interior:

> ...Thick wax candles stand upright; young men rise in white gowns;...
> An inclined plane of light comes accurately through each window, purple and yellow even in its most diffused dust, while, where it breaks upon stone, that stone is softly chalked red, yellow, and purple. Neither snow nor greenery, winter nor summer, has power over the old stained glass. As the sides of a lantern protect the flame so that it burns steady even in the wildest night... - so inside the Chapel all was orderly. (JR 29)

Virginia Woolf is clearly giving us her own experience of Cambridge - for her the lightness of the sky over King's College Chapel shines differently. It is also described as water being 'washed' into the crevices and being 'lighter, thinner, more sparkling' than the sky elsewhere. The concept of Cambridge burning into the night and into the day indicates the fusion of two ideas - the visual image of lights actually burning at night and the inner feeling of the intensity of intellectual and emotional life of those who live there.

'Burn' is used both literally and metaphorically. The same is true of the day. The light in the sky becomes identified with Virginia Woolf's own powerful reaction to the beauty and intense life of Cambridge, which seems to her to have a quality peculiar to itself.

> In the colours of the stained glass windows and the reflections they throw on the stonework, we find again the characteristic repetition of purple and yellow.[1] Light is then referred to in a simile where the steady flame protected by the sides of a lantern is likened to the chapel building protecting the orderly life within. What is emphasised in this image is the solid, protective quality of the metal lantern, rather than the flame inside. Different qualities of light and colour have been used in this passage in a variety of ways to give a very subjective picture of Cambridge and King's College Chapel.

Another scene where the fluid quality of light and clear colour convey a sense of beauty occurs when Clara Durrant climbs a ladder to pick grapes. Jacob is charmed by her but ironically never has the opportunity to express his feelings:

> Jacob held the ladder as she stretched out to reach the grapes high up on the vines... She looked semi-transparent, pale, wonderfully beautiful up there among the vine leaves and the yellow and purple bunches, and lights swimming over her in coloured islands. Geraniums and begonias stood in pots along planks; tomatoes climbed the walls. (JR 59)

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1. Cf. supra, p. 390-1.

Clara scarcely appears as a physical human being but as an extension to this scene of fluid transparency and bright colour - the yellows and purples of the grapes and the different shades of red suggested by the geraniums, begonias and tomatoes. Her semi-transparent appearance is due, no doubt, to the filmy type of dress she was wearing and the effect of the lights above the vine. These lights appear as luminous colour set against the darker background, as islands in the dark sea. One even wonders, if Virginia Woolf, did not deliberately choose such names as 'Clara' and 'Clarissa' for their associations with light (Lat. claritas).

The equating of coloured light with the image of 'islands' is repeated in The Waves when Jinny and Bernard play under the current bushes. Bernard is the narrator:

> This is our world, lit with crescents and stars of light; the great petals half transparent block the openings like purple windows... Things are huge and very small... Leaves are high as the domes of vast cathedrals. We are giants, lying here, who can make forests quiver.

Jinny then speaks:

> ... every time the breeze stirs we are mottled all over. My hand is like a snake's skin. My knees are pink floating islands. (W 18-9)

Everything appears disproportionately large. Bernard clearly sees the children's kingdom as a cathedral with the exaggerated effects of the sun shining through the purple petals like light slanting through stained-glass

windows. We observe the same qualities of transparency as in the description of Clara picking grapes on the vine, and the same image in both passages of 'islands' from reflected sunlight.

A snow scene where black and white predominate and a little light is mentioned might be compared with Joyce's description of a snow-covered countryside in 'The Dead'. While Jacob is sitting in his lodgings in London, snow is falling round his home in Cornwall:

> The snow, which had been falling all night, lay at three o'clock in the afternoon over the fields and the hill...the furze bushes were black, and now and then a black shiver crossed the snow as the wind drove flurries of frozen particles before it. The sound was that of a broom sweeping - sweeping...
> .....The sky was sullen grey and the trees of black iron. Uncompromising was the severity of the country. At four o'clock the snow was again falling. The day had gone out.
> A window tinged yellow about two feet across alone combated the white fields and the black trees...At six o'clock - man's figure carrying a lantern crossed the field.... A load of snow slipped and fell from a fir branch... Later there was a mournful cry... A motor car came along the road shoving the dark before it... The dark shut down behind it... ..... The land seemed to lie dead... The worn voices of clocks repeated the fact of the hour all night long. (JR 95-6)

Back in London:

> Jacob, too, heard them and raked out the fire. He rose. He stretched himself. He went to bed. (JR 96)

The scene is far from one which merely depicts the pure white beauty of a snowy landscape. As in so many of Virginia Woolf's descriptions, there is an oppressiveness

and here even a kind of deathliness. Black is frequently mentioned - in the furze bushes, the 'trees of black iron', and even the flakes of snow blown in the wind appear as 'a black shiver'. The sky is 'sullen grey'. The mournful gloom is only slightly alleviated by the allusions to light - a small lighted window and a man carrying a lantern. Sound also contributes to the pervading melancholy - the sound of the wind was like the monotonous sweeping of a broom; an unidentified 'mournful cry', perhaps that of a bird, was heard, and the 'worn voices of clocks' struck the hours through the night. By a very characteristic and skilful device, the striking of the clocks acts as a link and a unifying element in the flow of one scene or episode into another in a completely different place - here the countryside in Cornwall is linked with Jacob in his London lodgings.

Joyce's treatment of a snow scene shows very great differences. The sense-impressions of light, colour, sound and movement help to convey a visual picture and a state of mind in a style which is both succinct and musical:

> A few light taps upon the window made him turn to the window. It had begun to snow again. He watched sleepily the flakes, silver and dark, falling obliquely against the lamplight....the newspapers were right: snow was general all over Ireland. It was falling on every part of the dark central plains, on the treeless hills, falling softly upon the Bog of Allen and, farther westward, softly falling into the dark mutinous Shannon waves, it was falling too, upon every part of the lonely churchyard on the hill where Michael Furey lay buried. It lay thickly drifted on the crooked crosses and headstones, on the spears of the little gate, on the

Continued....

> barren thorns. His soul swooned slowly
> as he heard the snow falling faintly
> through the universe and faintly falling,
> like the descent of their last end, upon
> all the living and the dead. (D 200-1)[1]

The sense of death is more real in this scene than in Virginia Woolf's, but the pervading atmosphere is far gentler, softer, more nostalgic than in her starker, rather frightening picture.

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1. A remarkable similarity in the treatment of a snow-scene in The Years has been pointed out in an excellent work on Virginia Woolf by Avrom Fleishman:

> From the opening lines, [the chapter] '1913' reveals its probable inspiration by 'The Dead': "It was January. Snow was falling; snow had fallen all day. The sky spread like a grey goose's wing from which feathers were falling all over England." (Y 230)

This passage and subsequent references in the chapter to the snow falling are more similar to Joyce's than the passage analysed in the above text, but though, as Avrom Fleishman says:

> The snow becomes a carrier of the common fate as surely under these circumstances as it does for the lovers and loveless of the Dubliners tale,

l.c. The basic difference still remains: Joyce's poetic and concentrated style conveys this sense of unity in a single closing paragraph whereas Virginia Woolf uses the motif of the falling snow to move flexibly in time and space, connecting various people's lives in different places at the same point in time.

A. Fleishman, Virginia Woolf. A Critical Reading, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1975, p.187.

The style in the first description is far more diffuse. Every aspect of the scene is conveyed through a succession of different sense-impressions, but her use of sound - in particular, in the motif of the striking clocks - is completely different from Joyce's. His onomatopoeic and repeated use of the soft sound 'falling' in connection with the snow not only has a musical, lulling effect but also a poetic one. If one could express these writers' thought processes diagramatically, Virginia Woolf's would appear here with a central point from which related scenes and sensations spring. Joyce's would be the reverse - associated scenes and thoughts converge and are welded into a particular experience: Gabriel's sense of the universal - the falling snow embracing 'all the living and the dead.'

A squalid city scene in Jacob's Room can also be compared with a similar scene in Joyce's A Portrait, to illustrate some differences in the two authors' type of consciousness and awareness of particular sense-impressions. Virginia Woolf's portrayal of London at night, particularly the market in Soho, gives a wonderful picture of crude light, garish colour, rough voices and various textures:

> The lamps of London uphold the dark as upon the points of burning bayonets. The yellow canopy sinks and swells over the great four-poster... The light burns behind yellow blinds and pink blinds, and above fanlights, and down in basement windows. The street market in Soho is fierce with light. Raw meat, china mugs and silk stockings blaze in it. Raw voices wrap themselves round the flaring gas-jets. Arms akimbo, they stand on the pavement bawling - Messrs Kettle and Wilkinson, their wives sit in the shop, furs wrapped round their necks....Shawled women carry babies with purple eyelids;... Every face, every shop, bedroom window, public-house, and dark square is a picture feverishly turned - in search of what? It is the same with books, what do we seek through millions of pages? Still hopefully turning the pages - Oh, here is Jacob's room. (JR 93-4)

Joyce's far more concise description of a poor shopping district shows the same elements of light and colour but smell is a predominant feature:

> ...The squalid scene composed itself around him; the common accents, the burning gasjets in the shops, odours of fish and spirits and wet sawdust, many men and women. An old woman was about to cross the street,....and.. she held out her reeking withered right hand under its fringe of shawl.... (PAYM 144)

Joyce takes a few salient features which are enough to convey an impression of noise, squalor, poverty and the characteristic odours of such a neighbourhood. Virginia Woolf, on the other hand, presents a much more particularised picture in which you sense that she herself has been struck, first by one aspect then another, with almost dizzy intensity. It seems at the beginning that she has viewed the scene from above - the lights of London are swaying like a covering over the life below. Her eye then

moves this way and that, from the lights behind coloured blinds in buildings, above and below ground level, to the market itself, blazing with sharp illumination, the goods on display, the salesmen, their wives and passers-by with their babies. As was observed in the snow-scene, where the motif of clocks striking creates a link between two distinct places, so in this context the mass of faces, shops and buildings which she examines set her off on a kind of meditation. They come to symbolise the pages of a book which the enquiring mind turns over in search of something - she does not know what. This abstract concept of life appearing as a book through which one progresses becomes fused with the physical action of walking onward, as she suddenly finds herself at Jacob's lodgings. The link has been made but in a tortuous way.

In this passage, I think we have two distinct features of her writing: the ability to portray a scene with the greatest exactitude, whether through use of imagery or careful observation, and at the same time the attempt to create an artistic unity through association of ideas and symbols. The latter device, in many cases, seems forced and detracts from the wonderfully vivid descriptions preceding it. The heaping up of impressions as evocative as the raw meat, china mugs and silk stockings, lit up brilliantly, followed immediately by the metaphorical allusion to how'raw voices wrap themselves round the

flaring gas-jets' somehow loses ~~their~~ force as the description goes on to abstract associations leading to the point where we are confronted by Jacob's lodgings.

In Virginia Woolf's hyper-awareness of everything around her and her burning desire to find the way to express it all,[1] she sometimes appears to be not completely master either of her own reactions or of the material she is writing about.

In To the Lighthouse, the element of light takes on symbolic qualities. The beams from the lighthouse become equated with abstract concepts such as Mr. Ramsay's vision of himself as a philosopher and Mrs. Ramsay's consciousness of her own beauty.[2] James's final confrontation with the real lighthouse rather than the idea of it which he had treasured since he was a very young child, brings up the whole philosophical subject of objective and subjective reality. Candlelight inside and outside the house comes to symbolise stability and unity.

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1. Virginia Woolf has put forward her views on this subject in one of her essays:

> ... no 'method', no experiment, even of the wildest - is forbidden, but only falsity and pretence... everything is the proper stuff of fiction, every feeling, every thought, every quality of brain and spirit is drawn upon; no perception comes amiss.

(Virginia Woolf, Collected Essays II, Hogarth Press, 1966, p.110.)

2. Avrom Fleishman has commented on the role of the lighthouse beam:

> While the characters follow the sun in their social life,... they respond more acutely to the lighthouse beam in their private, imaginative life, using it to order their own rhythms and even to shape their innermost sense of identity.

A.Fleishman, Virginia Woolf. A Critical Reading, p.123.

Mrs. Ramsay, as she sits knitting, tries by a conscious effort to identify herself with the beam from the lighthouse:

> ...she looked out to meet that stroke of the lighthouse,... the last of the three, which was her stroke,... Often she found herself sitting and looking,... until she became the thing she looked at - that light for example. ... She looked up... and met the third stroke and it seemed to her like her own eyes meeting her own eyes, searching as she alone could search into her mind and her heart... She praised herself in praising the light, without vanity, for she was stern, she was searching, she was beautiful, like that light. (TL 73-74)

The initial sensory impact of the light leads to a train of introspection in which she feels some of her own qualities - austere and searching like that beam. The same serene confidence is apparent later:

> ... she looked at the steady light, the pitiless, the remorseless, which was so much to her, yet so little, which had her at its beck and call... but for all that she thought, watching it with fascination, ... as if it were stroking with its silver fingers some sealed vessel in her brain whose bursting would flood her with delight, she had known ... intense happiness, and it silvered the rough waves a little more brightly, as daylight faded, and the blue went out of the sea and it rolled in waves of pure lemon which curved and... broke upon the beach and the ecstasy burst in her eyes and waves of pure delight raced over the floor of her mind and she felt, It is enough! It is enough! (TL 75-6)

This monologue is an excellent example of Virginia Woolf's skill in fusing a visual image with associated thoughts and sensations - the one flowing into the other with scarcely any transition. The lighthouse is personified

first as a relentless creature with its monotonously regular strokes across the sea and sky,then as a being with stroking 'silvery fingers' capable of releasing inner happiness within the woman's mind. The silver image is now transferred to the waves, shining in the beams of the lighthouse lamp and the breaking of these waves becomes synonymous with 'waves of pure delight' rushing through her, making her feel satiated with happiness. The reference to 'pure lemon' as the colour of the waves is extraordinary.[1]

James's view of the lighthouse is naturally different. The trip to it had been for him as a young boy the symbol of the unattainable. It had been promised him but not until many years had gone by did it actually materialise:

> 'It will rain', he remembered his father saying. 'You won't be able to go to the Lighthouse.'
>
> The Lighthouse was then a silvery, misty-looking tower with a yellow eye that opened suddenly and softly in the evening. Now - James looked at the Lighthouse. He could see the white-washed rocks; the tower stark and straight, he could see that it was barred with black and white; he could see windows in it; he could even see washing spread on the rocks to dry. So that was the Lighthouse, was it?
>
> No, the other was also the Lighthouse. For nothing was simply one thing. The other was the Lighthouse too. It was sometimes hardly to be seen across the bay. In the evening one looked up and saw the eye opening and shutting and the light seemed to reach them in that airy sunny garden where they sat. (TL 215-6)

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1. For further discussion of Virginia Woolf's treatment of colour see pp. 380-387.

The discrepancy between the dream-like 'silvery misty-looking tower with a yellow eye' and the mundane erection 'barred with black and white' with windows in it and washing spread out to dry on the rocks nearby, is as forcible as the image in L'Éducation sentimentale that Frédéric builds of Mme. Arnoux in all her wealth and elegance and how he then sees her in modest surroundings after her financial disaster:

> ... elle lui semblait avoir perdu quelque chose, porter confusément comme une dégradation, enfin n'être pas la même. (ES 129)[1]

There is, however, a very great difference in the way the change is presented. Virginia Woolf's scene is one of colour and presents a clearly defined picture of the lighthouse, personified, with its yellow eye opening and shutting. The idea that Flaubert's description conveys is far more abstract - something that Frédéric senses within himself.

In Virginia Woolf's vision of life, there is no such thing as fixed identity - everything is many-sided. How characters feel themselves to be, how another person sees them, and how they actually are - all this builds up an amalgam of what we call human identity. Does not Clarissa in Mrs. Dalloway tell us:

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1. For further discussion of this passage, see supra p. 98.

> She would not say of anyone in the world now that they were this or were that. She felt very young; at the same time unspeakably aged. (MD 9)

Or Bernard in The Waves;

> I am not one person; I am many people; I do not altogether know who I am - Jinny, Susan, Neville, Rhoda or Louis; or how to distinguish my life from theirs. (W 237)

This type of consciousness bears many similarities with the theories of Bergson, by whom Virginia Woolf may have been consciously or unconsciously influenced.[1] The extent to which an author is directly influenced by a particular philosopher or literary figure or merely feels within himself the intellectual spirit of his age, is something impossible to gauge.

In To the Lighthouse, the theme of light also has symbolic interest in the series of images created at the Ramsay's dinner-table. Candle-light, the colour of the dishes and food, the lights outside and the warmth of the people gathered together combine to symbolise stability, unity and a common human bond:

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1. Henri Bergson's theory of 'la durée', the inner reality of the personality, flowing through time, was extremely fashionable at the time Virginia Woolf was writing. Shiv Kumar in his book, Bergson and the Stream of Consciousness Novel (Blackie, 1962), has drawn parallels between Bergson's philosophy and Virginia Woolf's perceptions, but believes that the resemblances were coincidental and that the 'Bergsonian' influence in her work was probably due to her reading of Proust.

> Now eight candles were stood down the table, and after the first stoop the flames stood upright and drew with them into visibility the long table entire, and in the middle a yellow and purple dish of fruit. What had she done with it, Mrs. Ramsay wondered, for Rose's arrangement.... made her think of...Neptune's banquet,.. Augustus too feasted his eyes on the same plate of fruit, plunged in, broke off a bloom there, a tassel here,.. That was his way of looking, different from hers. But looking together united them. (TL 112-3)

The initial sensory impact on Mrs. Ramsay is one of light and colour. The observation that she is then led to make - the fruit-dish attracting both her and Mr. Carmichael's attention and thus uniting them, is reminiscent of the carnation symbol in The Waves. The colour of the centre-piece in each case unites the viewers. In The Waves, it was:

> - a whole flower to which every eye brings its own contribution. (W 108)

Mrs. Ramsay's inner monologue continues as the meal progresses. She is serving the Boeuf en Daube; surrounded by her family and friends she feels completely at peace. It was a moment which 'partook of... eternity', as she expresses it. Is not this moment of crystallised experience similar to Joyce's epiphanies? Mrs. Ramsay felt that:

> ...there is a coherence in things, a stability; something,.. is immune from change, and shines out (she glanced at the window with its ripple of reflected lights) in the face of the flowing, the fleeting, the spectral, like a ruby; so that again tonight she had the feeling... of peace, of rest. Of such moments, she thought, the thing is made that remains for ever after. This would remain. (TL122-3)

In the midst of the ordinary flux of life, certain moments stuck in the consciousness, shone like a ruby. Even as she had these thoughts, her eye wandered to the reflected lights in the window - the real and the abstract combining to form a single impression of light. The unexpected image of a precious stone in this context makes one wonder whether Virginia Woolf had perhaps some childhood memory of a precious stone or piece of jewellery being lost or appearing in an unexpected place, for this is a recurring motif.[1]

Light, shade and colour naturally play a part in Lily Briscoe's artistic creation which forms, as it were, a framework within a framework. The painting she eventually produces, with its final touch - the line in the centre - is symbolic of the Lighthouse which is itself the unifying element within the novel. As Virginia Woolf wrote in a letter to Roger Fry:

> I meant <u>nothing</u> by <u>The Lighthouse.</u> One has to have a central line down the middle of the book to hold the design together.[2]

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1. For further references see:

   JR 130, a garnet brooch lost in the grass.

   MD 107, metaphorical allusion to pearl or diamond lost in the grass.

   TL 89, 203, pearl brooch lost on the seashore.

2. Quoted in Quentin Bell, <u>Virginia Woolf. A Biography</u>, vol. II, 27 May 1927, p.129.

Throughout the work, Lily is seen struggling to portray, in terms of light, shade, colour and line, the scene before her as it filters through her consciousness. The quality of fluidity which she senses in life itself and which she transmits through her strokes of paint is a predominant one:

> The brush descended. It flickered brown over the white canvas;... A second time she did it - a third time.... and so, lightly and swiftly pausing, striking, she scored her canvas with brown running nervous lines which had no sooner settled there than they enclosed... a space. Down in the hollow of one wave she saw the next wave towering higher and higher above her. For what could be more formidable than that space? (TL 182)

Her conception of her own work contained a kind of duality, rather like that which Virginia felt about her creative writing. On the surface it should be light, clear and full of colour but the basic structure should be solid:

> Beautiful and bright it should be on the surface, feathery and evanescent, one colour melting into another like the colours on a butterfly's wing; but beneath the fabric must be clamped together with bolts of iron. It was to be a thing you could ruffle with your breath; and a thing you could not dislodge with a team of horses. And she began to lay on a red, a grey,... (TL 198)

Contained in this passage are several features characteristic of Virginia Woolf's awareness of sense-impressions - particularly those of light, texture and colour. The 'feathery and evanescent' qualities[1] refer to the texture

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1. For another example, see supra p. 336.

of Lily's brushwork and the 'colours on a butterfly's wing' are reminiscent of many other such references to butterflies with their colourful, light, fluttering movement.[1]

For Lily, painting and thinking are simultaneous actions:

> And as she dipped into the blue paint, she dipped too into the past there. (TL 199)

Virginia Woolf makes use of this process of artistic creation to open up a way for the reader to see not only Lily's ideas on painting but to show us the past and present of all the characters in the novel as they pass, one by one, through her mind.

An underlying feature which runs through a great deal of Virginia Woolf's work is the sense of the fluctuating, fleeting and transitory within which some kind of stability must be found. Lily as well as Mrs. Ramsay are aware of these sensations. When Lily returns to the Ramsay's home after many years and the promised trip to the Lighthouse takes place, she philosophises on the meaning of life:

> The great revelation had never come. The great revelation perhaps never did come. Instead there were little daily miracles... Mrs. Ramsay making of the moment something permanent.... this was of the nature of a revelation. In the midst of chaos there was shape; this eternal passing and flowing (she looked at the clouds going and the leaves shaking) was struck into stability. (TL 186)

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1. For further references to butterflies, see supra p. 390 note 1.

Lily in her painting and Virginia Woolf in her writing were both 'making of the moment something permanent.' A work of art was the imposing of form on a mass of material in a state of flux. As Lily expresses it:

> Always.... before she exchanged the fluidity of life for the concentration of painting she had a few moments of nakedness when she seemed... without protection to all the blasts of doubt. (TL 183)

(ii) Light, colour and movement

As mentioned at the beginning of the section on light, the sense-impression of movement often accompanies that of light, either actually or as a sensation or idea in the mind. We may look first at a concrete example before moving on to the main part of the material which is connected with particular states of mind. In Jacob's Room, a description of rain at night can be compared with a similar scene in Joyce's short story, 'Araby'. Here is Virginia Woolf's:

> .... a powerful oil lamp stood on the middle of the table. The harsh light fell on the garden;...Mrs. Flanders had left her sewing on the table... There were the bulrushes and the 'Strand' magazines;... A daddy-long-legs shot from corner to corner and hit the lamp globe. The wind blew straight dashes of rain across the window, which flashed silver as they passed through the light. A single leaf tapped hurriedly, persistently, upon the glass. There was a hurricane at sea.
> (JR 10)

There is no sense of comfort or warmth, often characteristic of descriptions of rain at night while a family is closely closeted indoors. It was a 'harsh' light that shone over the garden and one has the impression that everything was at the mercy of the elements. Particular details accentuate the emptiness of the room - objects that have been left, Mrs. Flanders' sewing, 'Strand' magazines. As if explaining events she tells us at the end that there was a hurricane at sea. Perhaps this feature of her work was a deliberate effort on her part

to gather events together and fix certain points in her own mind as much as in the reader's.

Joyce's scene is, as usual, more concise and less particularised:

> ... It was a dark rainy evening and there was no sound in the house. Through one of the broken panes I heard the rain impinge upon the earth, the fine incessant needles of water playing in the sodden beds. Some distant lamp or lighted window gleamed below me. I was thankful I could see so little. (D 26-7)

Joyce, whose basic attitude to life was one of affirmation and acceptance, whether of love or death, makes this miserable place a haven for the young boy. It is a dark refuge where he can nurture his love for Mangan's sister. He feels no horror at the fact that a priest had died in that very room, that the window panes were broken, that he was in darkness and that the only sound was the fine rain outside. Virginia Woolf's scene shows the reverse. Her type of sensitivity made her see the storm in its most alarming aspects; there is a sense of emptiness and isolation despite the fact that the room she describes is in the house of a happy family of children safely in bed on a rainy night.

The portrayal of Septimus Warren Smith's state of mind, in Mrs. Dalloway and, to a lesser extent, Rhoda's in The Waves exemplify clearly Virginia Woolf's consciousness of light, colour and movement fused in a single experience. Certain aspects of Rhoda's psychology

are strikingly similar to Septimus's. In discussing these passages where Septimus is becoming insane as an after-effect of shell-shock, and Rhoda has moments of extreme mental instability, we must bear in mind that Virginia Woolf's own consciousness is being revealed to an horrific degree - horrific not only for the reader but for the author herself who is relating to her previous periods of insanity.[1] While writing about Septimus in September 1923, she had a 'mental tremor'[2] reminiscent of her periods of insanity; the intensity with which she was evoking these scenes was too powerful.

The degree of personal involvement in her writing is comparable with Flaubert's when he identifies himself with Emma Bovary in her nervous crisis. He was afraid of suffering the same symptoms himself.[3] Both authors are making use of their abnormal states of consciousness to portray certain states of mind in their characters.

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1. According to her own confession:

> Of course the mad part tires me so much, makes my mind squirt [sic] so badly that I can hardly face spending the next weeks at it.
> (Virginia Woolf, A Writer's Diary, 19 June 1923, p.57)

2. Quentin Bell, Virginia Woolf, Vol.II, p.100-1.

3. Flaubert wrote to Louise Colet 23 December, 1853:
... au moment où j'écrivais le mot attaque de nerfs j'étais si emporté, je gueulais si fort et sentais si profondément ce que ma petite femme éprouvait, j'ai eu peur moi-même d'en avoir une....'
Correspondance, 3me série. Conard, p.404.

In these states a heightened awareness of sense-impressions also plays a part.

The first indication of Septimus's condition appears when the attention of all the passers-by is directed towards the important personage in the car with the blinds drawn. Light appears like flames:

> ... this gradual drawing together of everything to one centre before his eyes, as if some horror had come almost to the surface and was about to burst into flames, terrified him. The world wavered and quivered and threatened to burst into flames. (MD 15)

In his abnormal condition, he actually feels everything round him in a state of motion - the terms 'wavering' and 'quivering' suggest fluctuating light or the surface of water being ruffled. Sensations of whirling movement also characterised the type of hallucination from which Flaubert suffered during his nervous crises.[1]

The next scene takes place in Regent's Park, where Septimus is sitting with his Italian wife Rezia. Like Rhoda, he feels the need of physical contact with something hard and solid to make him feel secure:

> Happily Rezia put her hand down with a tremendous weight on his knee so that he was weighted down, transfixed, or the excitement of the elm trees rising and falling, rising and falling with all their leaves alight and the colour thinning and thickening from blue to the green of a hollow wave, like plumes on horses' heads, feathers on ladies', so proudly they rose and fell, so superbly, would have sent him mad. (MD 21-2)

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1. See Introduction, pp. 31-3

He sees an exaggerated and repeated rising and falling in the movement of the trees, reminiscent of waves. The leaves seem 'alight'. The wave motif is carried further in the blue and green tones, moving like the sea and the comparison with the slow, soft, curling movement of horses' plumes and ladies' feathers.[1]

The same association and a similar sensation of uncontrollable movement describe Rhoda's feelings as a young girl, when she lies in bed half asleep.:

> ...I will stretch my toes so they touch the rail at the end of the bed; I will assure myself, touching the rail, of something hard. Now-I cannot sink;... Walls and cupboards whiten and bend their yellow squares on top of which a pale glass gleams.... I sail on alone under white cliffs. Oh, but I sink, I fall!... I sink down on the black plumes of sleep;... I see the stretched flower-beds, and Mrs. Constable runs from behind the pampas-grass to say my aunt has come to fetch me in a carriage. I mount; I escape;... But I am now fallen into the carriage... where she sits nodding yellow plumes ... Oh, to awake from dreaming!... Let me pull myself out of these waters. But they heap themselves on me; they sweep me between their great shoulders; I am turned; I am tumbled; I am stretched, among these long lights, these long waves.... (W 22-3)

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1. For further references, see supra p. 335 note 1.

Here is a frightening portrayal of a state - half-dream and half-reality - where Rhoda cannot rid herself of the nightmarish sensations of waves pouring over her and someone coming to take her away. She too feels the need of 'something hard' to prevent her from falling. The falling or sinking sensation was felt by Septimus too;[1] also by Flaubert.[2] The scene is one of white light and soft undulating movement of plumes in the 'nodding yellow plumes' on her aunt's hat, the feathery quality of the pampas grass, and in the association of 'black plumes' with sleep. One is struck by the unexpected and characteristic reference to yellow.[3]

For Septimus, the elements of fire and water take on horrific proportions in his mad visions:

> He was drowned, he used to say, and lying on a cliff with the gulls screaming over him. He would look over the edge of the sofa down into the sea. Or...suddenly he would cry that he was falling down, down into the flames. (MD 125)

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1. For further references, see MD 78,81,125,127

2. See supra p. 65

3. For further references, see supra, pp. 384-7.

Septimus's and Rhoda's intense awareness of effects of light or flames and of undulating movement, whether in physical objects or - in their mind's eye - in the waves of the sea, are characteristic of their disturbed vision.

We may end this section with a scene of light and movement in Jacob's Room, where the sensation of shock is associated with falling. Jacob catches sight of Florinda in Greek Street on the arm of another man:

> The light from the arm lamps drenched him from head to toe. He stood for a minute motionless beneath it. Shadows chequered the street. Other figures, single and together, poured out, wavered across, and obliterated Florinda and the man.
> The light drenched Jacob from head to toe...
> It was as if... the switchback railway, having swooped to the depths, fell, fell, fell. This was in his face. (JR 91)

Water-imagery is very marked here - the light 'drenched' him and shadows 'poured out', as if the light and shade were flowing over him. The expression on his face of the sensation of falling to bottomless depths is sharply reminiscent of Mme. Arnoux at the news of Frédéric's supposed engagement to Louise Roque:

> C'était comme une désertion immense... Il lui semblait descendre dans quelque chose de profond, qui n'en finissait plus. (ES 271)[1]

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1. For fuller discussion of this passage, see p. 166 and notes 1 and 2.

SOUND

Sound as a sense-impression seems to be one to which Virginia Woolf attached comparatively little importance. Mrs. Dalloway, perhaps, differs from her other novels in this respect for the boom of Big Ben at regular intervals is central to its structure and artistic unity, just as the movement of the sea, at different times of the day and in different seasons, has a unifying role in The Waves. The concept of time, symbolised by the striking of the clock, was obviously uppermost in her mind, for she first called her novel The Hours.[1]

In The Waves, the repetitive crashing of the sea and the deep-rooted fear of life felt by Louis, symbolised in the 'sullen thud of the waves, and the chained beast stamps on the beach', also illustrate an interesting facet of Virginia Woolf's treatment of sound.

We may look first at some general scenes - different features of London life in Mrs. Dalloway, a Cambridge night in Jacob's Room, some aspects of sound in The Waves-and then traces the symbolism in the striking

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1. She wrote in her diary for Tuesday, June 19th, 1923:

> ...But now what do I feel about my writing? - this book, that is The Hours, if that's its name.
>
> V. Woolf, A Writer's Diary, Hogarth Press, 1953, p.57.

of Big Ben. As in Flaubert's descriptions of city scenes,[1] sound is often accompanied by movement. Virginia Woolf conveys the sense of vitality in London streets magnificently through the sound and movement of traffic and the passers-by. As we know from her Diary, she herself loved this aspect of London:

> Monday, May 26th. 1929
> London is enchanting. I step out upon a tawny coloured magic carpet, it seems, and get carried into beauty without raising a finger... people pop in and out, lightly, divertingly, like rabbits; and I look down Southampton Row, wet as a seal's back or red and yellow with sunshine, and watch the omnibus going and coming and hear the old crazy organs. One of these days I will write about London and how it takes up the private life and carries it on, without any effort. Faces passing lift up my mind;... [2]

She was, in fact, in the throes of writing Mrs. Dalloway at this time. The way in which people 'pop in and out' is reminiscent of the night scene discussed in the section on texture and colour.[3] We also note the characteristic reference to yellow.[4]

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1. Cf. ES 40-1, 84.

2. V. Woolf, A Writer's Diary, p.62

3. See supra p. 339.

4. For further references, see pp. 384-7.

The first scene characterised by sound and movement occurs when Clarissa sets out in the morning; she too loves London:

> In people's eyes, in the swing, tramp, and trudge; in the bellow and the uproar; the carriages, motor cars, omnibuses, vans, sandwich men shuffling and swinging; brass bands; barrel organs; in the triumph and the jingle and the strange high singing of some aeroplane overhead was what she loved; life; London; this moment of June. (MD 6)

One senses a whole-hearted enjoyment and involvement in life and humanity as a whole, irrespective of social class and unspoilt by the encroachment of any disagreeable quality. This is rare in her writing.

The reader is then taken to other parts of London. Sound again plays a part in the description, but here we return to the more characteristic scenes of high-society:

> .... everywhere, though it was still so early, there was a beating, a stirring of galloping ponies, tapping of cricket-bats; Lords, Ascot, Ranelagh and all the rest of it; wrapped in the soft mesh of grey-blue morning air, which, as the day wore on, would unwind them, and set down... the bouncing ponies,... and up they sprung, the whirling young men, and laughing girls in their transparent muslins, who even now, after dancing all night, were taking their absurd woollydogs for a run;... (MD 6)

This passage is an excellent example of the ease with which one scene flows without transition into another, indicating the flux of life, and also showing how hard it is to make sharp distinctions between the use of one sense-impression and another. ~~This~~ description starts the

with sounds evocative of the genteel sports - cricket, riding, polo; it leads on to a metaphorical use of texture in the 'soft mesh' of the fresh morning[1] and thence to the familiar motif of girls in 'transparent muslin'.[2] The whole description conveys a sense of the aura of high-class London life.

Slight sounds, characteristic of certain activities, help to create atmosphere without many additional visual details. As in L'Éducation sentimentale, where the atmosphere of the sickroom, in which Mme. Arnoux is tending her son Eugène, is suggested through sound only,[3] so in Mrs. Dalloway, Virginia Woolf does much the same, on certain occasions. For instance, the atmosphere as Rezia sits sewing is conveyed in the following terms:

> A little stir, a little crinkling, a little tapping built up something on the table there, where she sat sewing. (MD 125)

A description, in Jacob's Room, of the atmosphere in Trinity College, Cambridge, as evening draws on, depends to a large extent on the odd assortment of sounds:

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1. For other references to 'mesh', 'net', 'veil' etc. see supra pp. 351-2, 365-7.

2. For another reference, see supra, p. 376, (MD 13-4)

3. See supra p. 151, (ES 134)

> All the lights were coming out round the court, and falling on the cobbles,.... The young men were now back in their rooms. Heaven knows what they were doing. What was it that could drop like that?... upstairs they went and down they went, until a sort of fulness settled on the court, the hive full of bees, the bees home thick with gold, drowsy, humming, suddenly vocal, the Moonlight Sonata answered by a waltz. (JR 40)

The hum of voices, sounds of coming and going, the strains of different kinds of music fuse to convey an atmosphere of intense student activity. The hive full of bees conveys both a visual image of students' rooms, like individual cells, building up the entity of the college, and also the sense of soft, continuous, droning sound.

Before examining the theme of the striking of Big Ben, we may consider briefly some aspects of sound in The Waves. It is not a sense-impression that plays a particularly important role in this work, but it is naturally part of the theme connected with the waves themselves as they are described in each introductory section, and are also symbolic of Louis's fear of life, already referred to at the beginning of this section.

Before day breaks, the sea is calm; as each wave broke, it:

> ...drew out again, sighing like a sleeper whose breath comes and goes unconsciously. (W 5)

As the sun rises, the sound increases:

> ...the concussion of the waves breaking fell with muffled thuds, like logs falling, on the shore. (W 24)

The children's years at school are over; they are starting out on their several ways. The sound and movement of the sea increase as if mirroring their heightened activity in the wider world:

> The wind rose. The waves drummed on the shore, like turbaned warriors, like turbaned men with poisoned assegais who, whirling their arms on high, advance upon the feeding flocks, the white sheep. (W 64)

It is noticeable that the imagery becomes increasingly elaborate. The same motif of warriors with assegais is repeated and added to as the sun nears its zenith. The waves:

> ...fell with a regular thud. They fell with the concussion of horses' hooves on the turf. Their spray rose like the tossing of lances and assegais over the riders' heads..... They drew in and out with the energy, the muscularity of an engine... (W 92)

At midday:

> The waves fell; withdrew and fell again, like the thud of a great beast stamping. (W 128)

This passage, preceding as it does, the news of Percival's death, has definite symbolic implications - the sun has reached its highest point and Percival, struck down by fate, is in the flower of his youth.

> The day wanes, as the friends gradually age.

The waves are quiet, sighing as they ebb and flow:

> Now the sun had sunk....The waves breaking spread their white fans, far out over the shore,... then rolled back sighing over the shingle. (W 202)

The novel ends with Bernard's defiance of death and nature's eternal relentlessness:

> The waves broke on the shore. (W 256)

Merely through tracing these allusions to the sound of the waves, the intricate patterning of motifs in the novel becomes apparent. The passage describing the sea at midday is perhaps the most interesting, for the 'thud of a great beast stamping' is the recurring, nightmarish sound in Louis's consciousness which points to his basic sense of insecurity and fear - very similar to Rhoda's feeling of being pursued and even persecuted.[1] This introductory section also precedes the news of Percival's death, thus creating a kind of union between the ominous sound and the natural elements - the waves - with Louis's secret foreboding that had pursued him since childhood. and.

As a young boy he had heard:

> Tramplings, tremblings, stirrings (W 9)

On the last day of term at school, though all the boys are excitedly embarking on life, he feels a sense of oppression:

> ... I hear always the sullen thud of the waves; and the chained beast stamps on the beach. It stamps and stamps. (W 49)

Even as an adult, when he associates himself with the past:

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1. See W 23

> I find relics of myself in the sound that women made thousands of years ago, when I heard songs by the Nile and the chained beast stamping. (W 109)

He has always been pursued by misery - as he himself confesses:

> Life has been a terrible affair for me....
> I have known little natural happiness.
> (W 173)

The sound of Big Ben striking and church bells chiming in Mrs. Dalloway serve a purpose rather like that of the Lighthouse in To the Lighthouse - they are essential to the structure of the novel. The action in Mrs. Dalloway takes place within a day and the boom of Big Ben as it dominates the London scene links various characters, drawn together at a particular time, and # imposes form on another wise formless mass of experiences, sensations and memories, moving from the present to the past and back to the present again. As the lighthouse became personified and appeared to Mrs. Ramsay as 'pitiless' and 'remorseless', so the sound of Big Ben symbolises the inevitability of time passing.:

> ...Big Ben strikes. There! Out it boomed. First a warning, musical; then the hour, irrevocable. The leaden circles dissolved in the air. (MD 6)

At this point Clarissa is starting her day, the day of her party and these sounds introduce the busy London scene she loves so much. The unexpected visual image of 'leaden circles' which dissolve in the air to describe the abstract concept of sound is a strange device. 'Leaden' suggests

something grey and heavy while 'dissolved' intensifies the impression of something disappearing for good. It also suggests the circular eddies which grow increasingly larger until they disappear, when a solid object is thrown into water.

This motif recurs at intervals throughout the novel, pin-pointing certain events and moments which awaken memories of the past. Peter Walsh has revisited Clarissa after the lapse of many years and leaves her echoing her words about the party:

> ...speaking to himself rhythmically, in time with the flow of the sound, the direct downright sound of Big Ben striking the half-hour. (The leaden circles dissolved in the air.) (MD 44)

His thoughts wander from his own life and achievements to Clarissa as she was then and how she had once refused his offer of marriage. The chimes of St. Margaret's break in on his memories, awaken yet more memories and become identified with Clarissa herself. As they die away, the finality of the last stroke becomes symbolic:

> ... as the sound of St. Margaret's languished, he thought, she had been ill, and the sound expressed languor and suffering. It was her heart, he remembered; and the sudden loudness of the final stroke tolled for death..... No! No! he cried. She is not dead! I am not old,... (MD 46)

His defiance at the thought of death is reminiscent of Bernard's in The Waves. The bells chiming are fused in Peter's mind with Clarissa, their past relationship, her ageing and approaching death; it acts thus as a unifying agent for time past, present and future.

The sound of Big Ben and other clocks striking twelve serve as a means of linking different people's lives in various places. Septimus Warren-Smith's fate is about to be sealed as he and Rezia go to keep their appointment with Sir William Bradshaw:

> It was precisely twelve o'clock; twelve by Big Ben; whose stroke was wafted over the northern part of London; blent with that of other clocks, twelve o'clock struck as Clarissa Dalloway laid her green dress on her bed, and the Warren-Smiths walked down Harley Street.... (The leaden circles dissolved in the air). (MD 84)

The relentless booms of Big Ben foreshadow Sir William Bradshaw's diagnosis - Septimus should go into one of his Homes - which in turn hastens Septimus's decision to commit suicide.

A clock striking six as Rezia takes the sedative, after Septimus had jumped from the window, marks the end of an epoch - the end of her life with him. News of this young man's fate and Clarissa's consciousness of life and death become fused in Clarissa's mind as the clock strikes three in the morning. She identifies herself with him in a kind of defiant heroism:

> The clock began striking. The young man had killed himself; but she did not pity him; with the clock striking the hour, one, two, three she did not pity him, with all this going on... She felt somehow very like him - the young man who had killed himself. She felt glad that he had done it, thrown it away while they went on living. The clock was striking. The leaden circles dissolved in the air. (W 165)

In tracing these successive allusions to the striking of clocks, what becomes apparent is not Virginia Woolf's awareness of sound as such, as was the case in Flaubert's work, nor its musical qualities, as exemplified in Joyce, but her consciousness of it as a means for expressing the irrevocability of time.

MOVEMENT AND WATER-IMAGERY

Virginia Woolf's consciousness of movement is reflected in her repeated references to fluidity, whether in relation to abstract concepts or to physical objects. Even her style had developed similarities with the flowing quality of water.[1] Water-imagery plays an outstanding role in all the novels and, on occasions, shows some resemblance to Flaubert's use of such words as 'onde', 'onduler' and 'flot'. It covers a whole variety of subjects, from the ebb and flow of the sea, streams flowing, water dripping and rippling, light undulating and traffic moving, to the flux of life itself, with its infinite variety of sensations.

For the purposes of the analysis, I have divided the subject into the following sections:

(i) Water-imagery related to sensations

(ii) Water-imagery related to the various characters' sense of their own identity

(iii) Water-imagery with particular reference to the 'pool' motif

(iv) Water-imagery with particular reference to the term 'ripple'

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1. In her diary, at the time when she was planning The Waves, she writes,

> ...one reviewer says that I have come to a crisis in the matter of style; it is now so fluent and fluid that it runs through the mind like water.
>
> AWD, November 7, 1928, p.137.

(i) Water-imagery related to sensations

Various kinds of pleasure, contentment and harmony experienced by the characters in Virginia Woolf's novels are expressed through water-imagery. There is also an instance where the writer herself puts forward her views and expresses aesthetic pleasure in a passage about the changeableness of feminine beauty:

> ...it is like the light on the sea, never constant to a single wave. They all have it; they all lose it. Now she is dull and thick as bacon; now transparent as a hanging glass... at a top-floor window,... or in the corner of an omnibus; or squatted in a ditch - beauty glowing, suddenly expressive, withdrawn the moment after. (JR 111-2)

As fleeting and unpredictable as light reflected on waves, beauty shines out and then disappears.

If we look at some passages in which the characters in the novels express their emotions through sensations, we may take first Clarissa Dalloway as she sets out to buy flowers for her party and remembers with pleasure the freshness of early mornings at Bourton:

> How fresh, how calm,... the air was in the early morning; like the flap of a wave; the kiss of a wave, chill and sharp.... (MD 5)

Later, as she mends her green dress in preparation for the evening, her quiet, rhythmical movements and the calm around her fill her with a sense of satisfaction which she compared with the gentle movement of waves on a summer's day:

> Quiet descended on her, calm, content, as her needle, drawing the silk smoothly to its gentle pause, collected the green folds together... So on a summer's day waves collect, overbalance, and fall; collect and fall; and the whole world seems to be saying 'that is all' more and more ponderously,... (MD 36-7)

Another instance: Lily Briscoe in To the Lighthouse has returned to the Ramsay's home after many yeaxrs' absence. The memories that now people the empty house produce in her a sense of harmony and a realisation of the love she had felt for that family:

> ....One need not speak at all. One glided, one shook one's sails..... between things, beyond things. Empty it was not, but full to the brim. She seemed to be standing up to the lips in some substance, to move and float and sink in it, yes, for these waters were unfathomably deep. Into them had spilled so many lives. The Ramsays'; the children's; and all sorts of waifs and strays of things besides. A washerwoman with her basket; a rock; a red-hot poker; the purples and grey-greens of flowers; some common feeling which held the whole together. (TL 222-3)

The same sense of harmony between the members of a group of people who are joined by the common bond of love is expressed by Bernard in The Waves. The six friends are united in a single moment of happiness. Once the moment is over, each becomes intensely receptive to the surroundings:

> ...we six,...for one moment out of what measureless abundance of past time and time to come, burnt there triumphant. The moment was all; the moment was enough. And then Neville, Jinny, Susan and I, as a wave breaks, burst asunder, surrendered - to the next leaf, to the precise bird, to a child with a hoop,.. (W 239)

Types of inner experience which are normally extremely difficult to define are expressed by Virginia Woolf through the use of the 'wave' motif. Bernard goes on to analyse his sensations in terms of the water he sees flowing by: he feels his old power to impose himself on his environment to be slipping away. He asks himself if it was not a 'sort of death':

> I could not collect myself; I could not distinguish myself;... I could not recover myself from the endless throwing away, dissipation, flooding forth without our willing it and rushing soundlessly away out there under the arches of the bridge,... over the roughened water to become waves in the sea - (W 240)

He is expressing the lack of a sense of identity and self-confidence as he becomes aware of age creeping on. His final defiance in the face of death is expressed similarly in terms of the movement of water. It is dawn:

> A bird chirps. Cottagers light their early candles. Yes, this is the eternal renewal, the incessant rise and fall and fall and rise again.
>
> And in me too the wave rises. It swells it arches its back. I am aware once more of a new desire,...rising beneath me..... What enemy do we now perceive advancing against us,... It is death... Against you I will fling myself, unvanquished and unyielding, O Death! (W 255-6)

Life repeats itself continually with its dawns and sunsets, just as waves rise and break incessantly. The wave then becomes equated with a surge of emotion - a sense of participation in life which Bernard sees as threatened by oncoming death.

(ii) Water-imagery related to the various characters' sense of their own identity.

It is sometimes difficult to make a sharp distinction between sensation and a character's sense of identity but I have grouped together certain motifs in this section which recur repeatedly - as for example a ship or a sailor at sea, or a drop of water which accumulates, and which come to symbolise a character's type of consciousness and attitude to life, rather than a momentary sensation.

The image of a ship or a sailor alone at sea is a recurrent one. For example, Clarissa Dalloway, for all her apparent gaiety confesses that:

> She had a perpetual sense, as she watched the taxicabs, of being out, out, far out to sea and alone; she always had the feeling that it was very very dangerous to live even one day. (MD 9)

Mrs. Ramsay in To the Lighthouse sees her duty as a hostess - uniting her friends and family into a harmonious group as they sit round the dinner-table - in terms of a sailor steering his ship. The prospect wearies her:

> The whole of the effort of merging and flowing and creating rested on her...And so then... she began all this business, as a sailor not without weariness sees the wind fill his sail and yet hardly wants to be off again and thinks how, had the ship sunk, he would have whirled round and round and found rest on the floor of the sea. (TL 97)

An image is created of the mother, the life-giver, infinitely weary, wishing to find peace, but driven on to do her duty through sympathy and pity.

Life itself likened to the sea which sweeps people up and manipulates them is another familiar motif of Virginia Woolf's. Lily Briscoe as she watches Mr. Ramsay in the garden and Mrs. Ramsay with James in the window feels how exciting it is that:

> ... life, from being made up of little separate incidents which are lived one by one, became curled and whole like a wave which bore one up with it and threw one down with it, there, with a dash on the beach. (TL 54)

Jinny in The Waves revels in the activity and ceaseless motion of life:

> The activity is endless. And tomorrow it begins again;... Life comes; Life goes; we make life. So you say... I cannot tell you if life is this or that. I am going to push into the heterogeneous crowd. I am going to be buffetted; to be flung up, and flung down, among men, like a ship on the sea. (W 150-1)

To be carried along in the flow of life constitutes Jinny's sense of joyful participation and is in no way equated with being overpowered or lost in a mass of hostile elements. For Rhoda, however, the same sea image symbolises her sense of insecurity and complete lack of identity:

> I am to be broken. I am to be derided all my life. I am to be cast up and down among these men and women... like a cork on a rough sea. Like a ribbon of weed I am flung far every time the door opens. I am the foam that sweeps and fills the uttermost rims of the rocks with whiteness;.... (W 92)

Rhoda is at the mercy of life.

Susan who, since a child, had loved the simple, unsophisticated life of the fields, identifies herself with nature - the heat, the cold and the regular movements of the changing seasons. She is a strong maternal figure inspiring a sense of security. She foresees her own future with extraordinary exactness:

> I shall never have anything but natural happiness. It will almost content me. I shall go to bed tired. I shall lie like a field bearing crops in rotation; in the summer heat will dance over me; in the winter I shall be cracked with the cold. But heat and cold will follow each other naturally without my willing or unwilling. My children will carry me on; their teething, their crying, their going to school and coming back will be like the waves of the sea under me. No day will be without its movement. I shall be lifted higher than any of you on the backs of the seasons. (W 112-3)

As a young girl, she had experienced the same consciousness of the changing seasons:

> ... I am not afraid of the heat or of the frozen winter. (W 21)

The years pass, she has produced her family and continues her life of domestication:

> At night I sit in the armchair and stretch my arm for my sewing; and hear my husband snore; and look up when the light from a passing car dazzles the window and feel the waves of my life tossed, broken round me who am rooted; and see others' lives eddying like straws round the piers of a bridge (1) while I push my needle in and out and draw my thread through the calico. (W 164-5)

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1. For a similar image of traffic moving 'round the piers of a bridge', see MD 146.

The security she feels gives her mostly contentment, but perhaps there is a hint of nostalgia for something more varied, more exciting, as she herself admits:

> ... sometimes I am sick of natural happiness. (W 164)

Bernard's consciousness of experience and of life in general is expressed in a particular motif - a drop which symbolises the sum of experience within a period of time. At one point he, Neville and Percival are students at Cambridge and he thinks back over the past day. The 'drop' symbolises the sum of the day's experiences - rich and varied:

> Let me recollect. It has been on the whole a good day. The drop that forms on the roof of the soul in the evening is round, many coloured. (W 68)

The next reference to this 'drop' appears after many years have elapsed - Bernard realises he has aged:

> And time... lets fall its drop. The drop that has formed on the roof of the soul falls. On the roof of my mind time, forming, lets fall its drop. Last week as I stood shaving, the drop fell.... All through the day's work, at intervals, my mind went to an empty place, saying, 'What is lost? What is over?.... And as I buttoned on my coat to go home I said more dramatically, 'I have lost my youth.' (W 157)

The abstract concept of time and the experience that goes with it are expressed in the image of a drop of water which falls at its appointed time. This is reminiscent of the striking of Big Ben expressed in the image of the leaden circles dissolving in the air. There is an

element of finality in both these symbols and the abstract notion of time is being expressed through a visual image.

When the friends meet at Hampton Court,

Bernard has become more indrawn and conscious of loneliness. He had always needed human company but as time passes, his own isolation strikes him more forcibly:

> Drop upon drop ... silence falls. It forms on the roof of the mind and falls into pools beneath. For ever alone, alone, alone, - hear silence fall and sweep its rings to the farthest edges. Gorged and replete, solid with middle-aged content, I, whom loneliness destroys, let silence fall, drop by drop. (W 192)

Drops here symbolise silence and loneliness. The paradoxical 'hear silence fall and sweep its rings to the farthest edges' is once again an example of an abstract concept, silence, being expressed in the visual image of drops falling into water and causing circles of eddies. In the final section of the novel, Bernard goes over his and his friends' past. Experience is symbolised by the same 'drop' image:

> ... we all got up; we all went. But I, pausing, looked at the tree, and as I looked in autumn at the fiery and yellow branches, some sediment formed; I formed; a drop fell; I fell - that is, from some completed experience I had emerged. (W 217)

(iii) Water-imagery with particular reference to the 'pool' motif

Metaphorical allusions to pools occur almost entirely in To the Lighthouse. Movement is naturally less pronounced than in the wave-imagery which is so predominant in The Waves. The 'pool' motif appears mostly in connection with sensations, abstract concepts such as friendship and trains of thought where depth is of more importance than movement. Before looking at some examples in To the Lighthouse, we might consider an interesting passage in Jacob's Room, where the intimacy of Jacob and Simeon as students at Cambridge is expressed as follows:

> It was the intimacy, a sort of spiritual suppleness, when mind prints upon mind indelibly.....
>
> Simeon said nothing....But intimacy - the room was full of it, still, deep, like a pool. Without need of movement or speech it rose softly and washed over everything, mollifying, kindling, and coating the mind with the lustre of pearl,.... (JR 43-4)

The happy spiritual understanding between these two young men is suggested most skilfully through this use of extended imagery.

In To the Lighthouse, the beauty and calm that reigned in the empty house once the Ramsays had gone their several ways, is expressed through comparison with a pool at evening:

> So loveliness reigned and stillness, and together made the shape of loveliness itself, a form from which life had parted; solitary like a pool at evening, far distant, seen from a train window, vanishing so quickly that the pool... is scarcely robbed of its solitude, though once seen. (TL 150)

In another passage, men's minds with their ceaseless imaginings and thoughts are likened to:

> ... pools of uneasy water, in which clouds for ever turn and shadows form, dreams persisted,.. (TL 153)

Again, at a later point, Lily one early morning feels that:

> ... the whole world seemed to have dissolved... into a pool of thought, a deep basin of reality,... (TL 207)

Mrs. Ramsay has been dead for some years and Lily's awareness of Mr. Ramsay's loneliness and appeal for understanding is described in terms of water:

> His immense self-pity, his demand for sympathy poured and spread itself in pools at her feet, and all she did, ... was to draw her skirts a little closer round her ankles, lest she should get wet. (TL 176)

This piece of extended imagery expresses so well Lily's sensitivity to Mr. Ramsay's misery on the one hand and her defensive attitude and unwillingness to offer him help on the other. The metaphorical allusion to 'pool', as mentioned above, suggests depth of feeling or thought, and even perhaps a sense of the infinite, similar to Flaubert's use of 'infini', 'indéfiniment' etc.[1]

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1. See supra, p. 156 note 1

An interesting image connected with the 'pool' motif appears in The Waves when Rhoda thinks back over her time at school, remembering an incident with a puddle:

> Wind and storm coloured July. Also, in the middle, cadaverous, awful lay the grey puddle in the courtyard, when, holding an envelope in my hand, I carried a message. I came to the puddle. I could not cross it. Identity failed me. We are nothing, I said, fell....Then very gingerly, I pushed my foot across... I returned very painfully, drawing myself back into my body over the grey, cadaverous space of puddle. This is life then to which I am committed. (W 54)

As Virginia Woolf herself admits, there are certain aspects of human experience which are hard to explain.[1] In her characterisation of Rhoda, she has shown many of her own irrational fears and the feeling she sometimes had of a complete loss of identity.

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1. Life is... the oddest affair; has in it the essence of reality. I used to feel this as a child - couldn't step across a puddle once, I remember, for thinking how strange - what am I?

AWD. September 30, 1926, p.101.

(iv) Water imagery with particular reference to the term 'ripple'

The frequency with which Virginia Woolf uses the term 'ripple' is reminiscent of Flaubert's use of 'onde' and 'onduler'. It would appear that both were attracted to the soft, slight movement associated with these expressions, though 'ripple' suggests a quicker, more sudden movement while 'onduler' is slow and sensuous. Both are used when alluding to the movement of water, reflected light and, metaphorically, in a wide variety of other contexts.

The fluid quality of light as it falls on different surfaces is often described in these novels by the term 'ripple'. The candle-light as it illuminates the window-panes in the Ramsays' dining-room makes the outside world dim and:

> ... rippled it so strangely that here, inside the room, seemed to be order and dry land;...outside, a reflection in which things wavered and vanished, waterily. (TL 113)

The close association of light and water appears again in the sunlight glinting on the sea in The Waves:

> The waves were steeped deep-blue save for a pattern of diamond-pointed light on their backs which rippled as the backs of great horses ripple with muscles as they move. (W 128)

A comparison is being drawn here between backs of waves and the movement of horses' backs. An inverse example can be seen in Jacob's Room where a horse's leap is likened to a wave:

> A few moments before a horse jumps it slows, sidles, gathers itself together, goes up like a monster wave, and pitches down on the further side. (JR 97)

Parallels between Virginia Woolf's references to waves and horses and Flaubert's are interesting to trace. Whereas Virginia's are associated with the strong, heavy, curved movement of the entire horse's body, Flaubert's are confined to the graceful flowing of white horses' manes.[1] Joyce also speaks of waves and their white crests, reminiscent of horses' manes, but, characteristically, in connection with sound rather than as a visual image. Stephen's sense of joy is associated with language as:

> the long soft vowels hurtled noiselessly and fell away, lapping and flowing back and ever shaking the white bells of their waves in mute chime and mute peal and... soft low swooning cry;... (PAYM 230)[2]

In the afternoon light, in one of the introductory sections in The Waves, all is bathed in reddish colour:

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1. See supra, p. 200, ES 121/231

2. For discussion of this passage, see supra p. 299

> The afternoon sun warmed the fields,... reddened the corn... If a cow moved a leg it stirred ripples of red gold, and its horns seemed lined with light. (W 156)

Preceding this, at midday, sunlight beat down on the orchard and:

> currants hung against the wall, in ripples and cascades of polished red;... (W 127)

The water-imagery here conveys so accurately the impression of rich colour and abundance. The description of the English scene, of which this is a part, shows some other characteristics which are reminiscent of Flaubert's technique:

> Through atoms of grey-blue air the sun struck at English fields and lit up marshes and.... young corn and flowing hayfields. It beat on the orchard wall,.. and all the blades of grass were run together in one fluent green blaze. (W 127)

The fluid quality in the hayfields is repeated when Louis tells of his miserable life:

> ... I feel myself woven in and out of the long summers and winters that have made the corn flow and have frozen the streams. (W 173)

and in another reference to the 'flowing corn rippling to the edge.' Is not this way of describing hay and cornfields sharply reminiscent of Flaubert's scene as Frédéric and Deslauriers walk together?

> Les soirs d'été, quand ils avaient marché longtemps...et que les blés ondulaient au soleil....(ES 31)

As was noted in previous comparisons between Flaubert's and Virginia Woolf's use of imagery, Flaubert's is, on the whole, rather commonplace while Virginia Woolf's is more unexpected and imaginative. The visual effect is also more forceful in, for example, the 'flowing corn' and the 'flowing hayfields' where the movement of water is more evident than in Flaubert's 'les blés ondulaient'.

Another aspect of the use of 'ripple' can be seen in entirely different contexts where the impression is not one of light, but of movement in a metaphorical sense. Virginia Woolf obviously associates the term 'ripple' with the idea of news spreading or information being received as she refers in her diary to her critics' silence in the following way:

> The Common Reader was out on Thursday: this is Monday and so far I have not heard a word about it private or public; it is as if one tossed a stone into a pond and the waters closed without a ripple.[1]

The stir caused by the presence of an important personage is expressed ~~so accurately~~ in Mrs Dalloway by this term. It is being used figuratively but at the same time it conveys the sense of physical movement as one imagines people turning their heads and making hushed comments. A visual image is being used to express an abstract idea. In Mrs. Dalloway there are two interesting instances where ~~the same~~ this technique appears. Clarissa observes how the car carrying some person of note had left "a slight ripple" (MD 17).

1. AWD. Monday, April 27, 1925, p. 74.

and

Cc. /When the Prime Minister graces her party with his presence, the news goes round and:

> ... a sort of stir and rustle rippled through every one openly: the Prime Minister! (MD 153)

The word 'ripple' conveys precisely the imperceptible movement among people caused by their interest in a particular person of note.

The association of 'ripple' with movement, again in a metaphorical sense, is evident in Virginia Woolf's portrayal of Jinny in The Waves. The term comes to be used as a kind of motif. With its connotations of quick movement like that of a flickering flame or a flower stalk blown in the wind, it expresses her vivacity, life-force and power to attract. Jinny's character has already been discussed at some length in the section on Texture and colour[1] but we can look here at some passages where movement is predominant rather than texture.

While at school, she observes herself in the mirror:

> ... when I move my head, I ripple all down my narrow body; even my thin legs ripple like a stalk in the wind.... I leap like one of those flames that run between the cracks of the earth; I move, I dance; (W 35)

As she dreams of future romance:

> All is rippling, all is dancing;... (W 38)

Her power to attract is referred to repeatedly at the dance in these terms (W 88-9), and as she joins the group of friends at the restaurant, all eyes are turned on her.

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1. See particularly, pp. 350-55.

As Susan expresses it:

> She brings things to a point,...
> Now she sees us, and moves, and all
> the rays ripple and flow and waver over
> us bringing in new tides of sensation.
> (W 103)

The light and flowing water combine to express the life-force Jinny possesses, and the term 'ripple' can be used equally well in connection with light or water.

Earlier in the novel, Neville as a young boy connects 'ripple' with life itself. Halfway upstairs he had overheard a gruesome piece of conversation about a man who had been found dead in the gutter. This image he feels is something he cannot overcome - even physically he is unable to continue upstairs:

> He was found with his throat cut. The
> apple-tree leaves became fixed in the sky;
> the moon glared; I was unable to lift my
> foot up the stairs... The ripple of my life
> was unavailing. I was unable to pass by.
> 'I cannot surmount this unintelligible
> obstacle', I said. The others passed on.
> But we are doomed, all of us, by the apple
> trees, by the immitigable tree which we
> cannot pass. (W 20)

His physical inability to go on upstairs is a symbol of the deep-rooted, paralysing fear which comes over him even in later life. It reminds one of Louis's nightmarish vision of the 'chained beast that stamps on the beach', and even more particularly of a similar sensation that Rhoda experienced.[1]

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1. See supra, p. 441

An image, associated with the sea, which is something peculiarly ~~her~~ own is the fin which appears from out of the depths - an unaccountable, ominous sign which she took to mean the 'impulse behind another book'.[1] It appears in The Waves on several occasions. Bernard and Neville in their student days discussed literature to their hearts' content and then:

> ...sank into one of those silences which are now and again broken by a few words, as if a fin rose in the wastes of the silence; and then the fin, the thought, sinks back into the depths, spreading round it a little ripple of satisfaction, content. (W 234-5)

Thoughts which they express are symbolised by the fin. We note again the characteristic reference to 'ripple'.

As the years pass and Bernard suddenly feels he has accomplished nothing, the same image comes to his mind:

> Now there is nothing. No fin breaks the waste of this immeasurable sea. Life has destroyed me. (W 244)

He has lost his inspiration; he is:

> A man without a self.

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1. AWD. September 30, 1926, p.101.

SMELL AND TASTE

Although rich meals are described in great detail in Flaubert's novels, it was surprising to find that smell as a sense-impression was rarely alluded to and taste not at all. Scents were mentioned in connection with flowers and ladies' perfumes. In Joyce, it was bodily odours and the less savoury, dank smells in damp buildings and woods that were mentioned, but even these to a limited extent. In Virginia Woolf, artificial perfumes are only alluded to in very general terms but the savoury aromas and flavours of food appear on several occasions. Perhaps one can account for this by the fact that being a woman and used to housekeeping and planning meals - even if it only meant giving orders to the cook - she was more in touch with the culinary arts than her male counterparts.

Scents are referred to incidentally in all the novels - the general fragrance of flowers in a garden or florist's or a vague perfume in a room where a party is being held, but the most characteristic allusions are in the mixtures of pleasant and unpleasant odours in The Waves. The intrusion of an unsavoury element in an otherwise pleasing scene is a characteristic feature of Virginia Woolf's type of observation, as we have already noted.[1]

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1. For further references, see supra, p.347 note 1.

It reveals a consciousness of all facets of a particular experience rather than an automatic or conventional reaction. In two of the introductory sections of The Waves there are examples of her awareness of odours; the beauty of the garden is described and birds darting for worms, but in violent contrast:

> Down there among the roots where the flowers decayed, gusts of dead smells were wafted; drops formed in the bloated sides of swollen things. The skin of rotten fruit broke, and matter oozed too thick to run. (W 63)

These sense-impressions are as disgusting as any of Joyce's references to the stench of Hell and the nightmarish vision he has of goat-like creatures moving incessantly.[1] It is even more strikingly morbid than these, for one hardly expects such repellent images in a summer garden. The birds in the garden are described later and certain motifs are repeated. This time the scene is presumably outside the kitchen door. The birds:

> ...spring as if the edge of being... must split... the dampness of the wet earth; the fumes and steams of greasy kitchen vapour; the hot breath of mutton and beef; the richness of pastry and fruit; the damp shreds and peelings thrown from the kitchen bucket, from which a slow steam oozed on the rubbish heap. On all the sodden, the damp-spotted, the curled with wetness, they descended, dry-beaked, ruthless... They spied a snail... They tapped... until the shell broke and something slimy oozed from the crack. (W 93)

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1. See supra, pp. 300-328.

The onomatopoeic 'ooze' appears in this passage and in the previous one with all its unpleasant associations. Although good food is mentioned, the way in which it is described does not convey the savoury aroma of something tasty, but suggests rather the hot, wet quality of refuse from the kitchen bucket. The 'fumes', 'steams', 'vapour' and 'hot breath' are no different from the 'slow steam' that 'oozed' on the rubbish heap. This damp, steaming quality in descriptions of food ~~are~~ found again is when Louis sits in a London eating-house:

> All is somewhat obscured by steam from a tea-urn. A meaty, vapourish smell of beef and mutton, sausages and mash, hangs down like a damp net in the middle of the eating-house. (W 79)

There are no unpleasant associations in this passage. The atmosphere is of a typically English second-grade eating place - the steam and the smell of different foods combining to form what seemed like damp vapours. One does ask oneself, in both these passages, what the smell of 'beef and mutton' actually consists of. Is it not simply meat? Virginia Woolf's good upper-class English breeding, if not snobbishness, makes itself felt here!

The general feeling in these last two passages, connected with the damp, steamy atmosphere of kitchens and the preparation of food is strongly reminiscent of T.S. Eliot's 'Morning at the Window':

> They are rattling breakfast plates in
> basement kitchens,
> And along the trampled edges of the street
> I am aware of the damp souls of housemaids
> Sprouting despondently at area gates. [1]

Virginia Woolf and Eliot knew each other well and she was a great admirer of his work.

Though food is mentioned in all these instances, there is no suggestion of taste. The images created are visual ones. Rhoda sometimes speaks of human odours, even perfumes on one occasion, but she finds them all equally repulsive. For instance, when she wonders what to do with herself, alone in London, and imagines going to Hampton Court:

> But what can one make in loneliness?...
> somebody passes with a bag; there is a
> gardener with a wheelbarrow. I should
> stand in a queue and smell sweat, and scent
> as horrible as sweat; and be hung with
> other people like a joint of meat among
> other joints of meat. (W 138)

A similar distaste for people in general, in their physical and human aspects, can be seen in her confession, later:

> Oh, life, how I have dreaded you,...
> oh, human beings, how I have hated you!...
> how hideous you have looked in Oxford Street,...
> my mind is printed with brown-paper parcels
> and your faces. I have been stained by you
> and corrupted. You smelt so unpleasant too,
> lining up outside doors to buy tickets. (W 174-5)

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1. T.S. Eliot, Collected Poems 1909-1935, Faber & Faber, 1936, p.27.

Human odours, which she associated with the animal, the squalid and the ugly, is linked to her horror of the physical aspects of love - 'I left Louis; I feared embraces' - and contributes to the fact that she is quite unable to relate to ordinary human beings. There may also be some snobbery in her, as there is in Neville[1] and as there certainly was in Virginia Woolf herself.[2] If one were to compare Joyce's references to human odours with hers, one would see how Stephen, for example, is completely integrated with the human and animal sides of life and enters into them with the utmost joy and acceptance:

> ... it was her body he smelt, a wild and languid smell, the tepid limbs over which his music had flowed desirously and the secret soft linen upon which her flesh distilled odour and dew. (PAYM 238)

Physical love is the affirmation of life itself and it is this which is his inspiration. Rhoda who cannot partake of physical joy, finally renounces life altogether.

Taste and other accompanying sensations are described in a thoroughly original way when Neville enjoys his dinner at the friends' reunion:

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1. See W 73 for Neville's dislike of shop-girls' 'titter' and gossip.

2. See Introduction, p.22 re. Virginia Woolf's attitude to James Joyce.

> ...I eat. I gradually lose all knowledge of particulars as I eat... These delicious mouthfuls of roast duck, fitly piled with vegetables, following each other in exquisite rotation of warmth, weight, sweet and bitter, past my palate, down my gullet, into my stomach, have stabilised my body. I feel quiet, gravity, control. All is solid now. Instinctively my palate now requires and anticipates sweetness and lightness, something sugared and evanescent; and cool wine, fitting glove-like over those finer nerves that seem to tremble from the roof of my mouth and make it spread... into a domed cavern, green with vine leaves, musk-scented, purple with grapes. (W 118)

Neville's refined sense of taste responds to the various delicacies. After the meat course is finished, his sense of physical well-being gives him a feeling of peace and stability. It is interesting how the need for stability enters even this sphere of human activity. The sweet course is also characteristically described as being light, 'sugared and evanescent'; the cool sensation of wine on his palate brings to his mind a picture of purple grapes among their green leaves.[1]

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1. Cf. supra, p.327 (PAYM 48) where Stephen has a visual image of vineyards, evoked through the smell of the communion wine. In Neville's case, it is through taste.

CONCLUSION

In my Introduction, I pointed to a line of development which can be traced from Flaubert to James Joyce and on to Virginia Woolf, not so much from the point of view of theme, treatment and style in general, but in the far more particularised field of these writers' awareness of sense-impressions. Which are the sense-impressions that they are specially receptive to, what role do these play in their works and what is their relation to the narrator's consciousness?

In the course of the analysis,it became apparent that each of the writers was particularly aware of a different range of sense-impressions. One is struck by Flaubert's extreme sensitivity to different qualities of texture, fluctuating light on shimmering surfaces, irregularities of movement and an almost hyper-awareness of contrast, whether of light and shade, movement and immobility of sound and silence. There emerges,also,another interesting facet: the wealth of visual imagery and the parallel which can be drawn between Flaubert's descriptive technique and that of the Impressionist School of painting on the one hand, and the 'cinema' technique on the other. His use of 'long shots' and 'close-ups' foreshadows, in an extraordinary way, much that we are now familiar with in the modern cinema.

James Joyce shows a particular receptivity to the physical sense of touch, heat and cold, smell and, above all, sound with all the richness of its musical and poetic effects.

His visual images are confined to the soft grey, dimly-lit scenes of his childhood memories, but sound has an infinite attraction for him.

In Virginia Woolf's work, there is an intense preoccupation with colour, fluidity of light, filmy and evanescent textures and continual movement, both in the literal and figurative sense.

The role which these sense-impressions play in the three writers' works varies. Flaubert's use of minutely observed sense-impressions serves as an indirect means of characterising people and their environment. These impressions also reveal the beauty of the sensory world with its infinite variations of texture, colour, light, movement, sound and smell. Little reference is made to sense-impressions in figurative terms.

In Joyce's work, the individual sense-impressions cannot be so simply divided into separate categories but tend to build up a synthesis. At the same time we note another process, an intellectual one, in which the sense-impressions awaken memories or trains of thought which follow in logical sequence, thus conveying a total experience. The process may also work in reverse, from the thought back to the sense-impression. Joyce's references to sense-impressions are both literal and figurative and his pre-occupation with the sound of language and literary devices such as onomatopoeia, alliteration, repetition and variations on a particular theme, increases as his works gain in complexity.

In the case of Virginia Woolf, there is again a fusion of individual sense-impressions, memories, thoughts and sensations which cannot be placed in clear-cut categories. They do not, however, necessarily follow in strict logical sequence, for she was trying to portray the workings of the human mind and the simultaneity of experience outside the confines of time and space. The mass of rich visual images, full of colour and light, and the constant sense of movement intensify the portrayal of her particular experience of reality. Sense-impressions also contribute to the patterning of motifs,which comes to be an integral part of her work. This is somewhat different from Joyce's technique - so reminiscent of musical composition.

It would appear that there is a definite relation between a writer's particular receptivity to a certain range of sense-impressions and his, and therefore the narrator's, consciousness. The way in which any individual reacts to the sensory world and his particular awareness of sense-impressions is a part of his total consciousness and, I believe, has a physical basis. There is a clear connection between biographical information about these writers' nervous and physical make-up and their receptivity to senstory experience. Flaubert's nervous disorder contributed to a heightened sensitivity and a particular awareness of disharmony and irregularities. Joyce's poor eyesight probably accentuated his receptivity to the musical qualities inherent in sound and also his sense of heat and

cold, touch and smell. Virginia Woolf's extreme mental instability is reflected in her exaggerated awareness of the insubstantiality of matter and life in a constant state of flux.

In conclusion, I should like to postulate that the material collected in the course of my analysis would seem to substantiate the view that the individual nature of a writer's experience cannot be disassociated from what he creates.[1] Leon Edel in his study of the psychological novel expresses the following point of view:

'In a broad sense, that is in a general psychological sense, everything we do is an expression of ourselves. How we walk, how we talk, the nervous impulses that drive our pen across a sheet and give an individual form to our handwriting, the words we speak and the phrases and sentences we build out of them, the images we conjure up and the objects our eyes select, these are all autobiographical acts, so that a book we write is the book of oursevles. When a poet writes the simplest lyric, his choice of word and image and symbol is his and no one else's, ...'[2]

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1. This has been expressed by René Wellek in his study of the concept of realism. He refers to Henry James who also recognised the impossibility of aiming at complete impersonality:

> Vision and opportunity reside in a personal sense and personal history, and no short cut to them in the interest of plausible fiction has ever been discovered.

R. Wellek, Concepts of Criticism, Yale University Press, London, 1963, pp. 248-251.

2. L. Edel, The Psychological Novel, 1900-1950, p.113.

It is on a similar note that I should like to conclude my thesis. If 'everything we do is an expression of ourselves' then the 'detachment' of the author which Flaubert, Joyce and Virginia Woolf each strove for in their individual ways, appears practically an impossibility. Even if a writer describes his sense-impressions indirectly through the characters he creates, the fact remains that they reflect the experience of life through its sensory impact. This can be nothing other than his own experience.

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